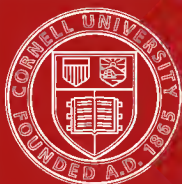


**BOHEMIA'S CASE
FOR INDEPENDENCE**

DR EDOUARD BENES



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BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
HENRY WICKHAM STEED

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
I	
THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS : OUTLINE OF THEIR HISTORY	1
II	
THE STRUGGLE OF THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AGAINST THE GERMANS	5
III	
THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AND THE HABSBURGS	9
IV	
THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AND THE MAGYARS. A LEGEND TO BE DESTROYED	38
V	
THE PAN-GERMAN PLAN : THE SLAVS OF ANCIENT AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AND ITALY	45
VI	
THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AND THE WAR, 1914	53
VII	
THE NATIONAL SPIRIT OF THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS	76

VIII

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PAST AND THE HOPES FOR THE FUTURE. REORGANISATION OF CENTRAL EUROPE AND INDEPENDENT BOHEMIA . . .	82
---	----

IX

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ENGLAND AND BOHEMIA IN THE PAST AND IN THE FUTURE . . .	95
--	----

X

APPEAL TO THE POWERS OF THE ENTENTE . . .	107
---	-----

APPENDIX	112
--------------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS RELATING TO THE CZECH QUESTION	131
---	-----

INTRODUCTION

THE publication of this little book is timely. The British public, always prone to look upon "foreign affairs" as mysterious and unintelligible, has been groping its way, during the last two-and-a-half years, towards some dim knowledge of the causes of the war and of the fundamental conditions of a lasting peace. Its cognitions are still rudimentary. The neglect of generations cannot be made good in so brief a period, even under the stimulus of the greatest struggle known to history. Yet, though it be not possible to "cram" for the examination which the British peoples will presently be required to pass if a satisfactory peace is to end the war, it is possible to inculcate upon them the broad lessons of history, geography and ethnology in such a way as to give them a standard by which to judge situations and events. In this little volume, Dr. Beneš, the distinguished collaborator of Professor Masaryk, sets forth with clearness and cogency "the case for the independence of Bohemia." Alongside of "the case" for the unity and independence of Poland, with which it is intimately connected, and "the case" for the independence and unity of the Southern Slav peoples, which forms its necessary pendant, the case for Bohemia is seen

viii BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

to be one of the cardinal points of the political firmament whenever the eye turns in search of a stable peace. It is true that the independence of Bohemia, that is, the independence and unity of the Czecho-Slovak race, involves that "dis-memberment of Austria" against which British pacifists so strangely protest. A sudden and touching solicitude for the preservation of the Habsburg realms, in some federalised form, has been noticeable of late in quarters formerly proud of their "Liberalism." Gladstone's verdict that "nowhere has Austria ever done good" seems to have been forgotten by these ultra-liberal partisans of Austrian intangibility. They have taken up the position held by the mid-Victorian Tories, against whom the famous parody of "Who is Sylvia?" was directed in *Macmillan's Magazine* of 1866 :—

Who is Austria? What is she?
That all our swells commend her?
Dogged, proud and dull is she;
The heavens such gifts did lend her
That she might destroyed be.

But what is Austria? Is it fair
To name among the nations
Some Germans who have clutched the hair
Of divers populations,
And, having clutched, keep tugging there?

From the moment that Austria-Hungary, at the instance of Germany, decided to use the Sarajevo assassinations as a pretext for the long-planned "punitive expedition" against Serbia, I have been convinced—as Count Albert Mensdorff,

the former Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London will remember—that the Habsburg Monarchy was about to commit suicide. It was evident to those practically acquainted with Austro-Hungarian affairs that, whether Austria-Hungary were left to crush Serbia without interference from the Great Powers, or whether the conflict were to grow into a European conflagration, the real independence of the Habsburgs would be a thing of the past. They could not overrun and annex Serbia without incurring such obligations towards Germany as to render them, more than ever, German vassals. In the event of a European conflagration they could only hope for victory through German support, and victory would render them a mere link in the Pan-German chain of States stretching from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf. In the event of defeat in a European war, they could not hope to resist the aspirations of their peoples for liberation, or, indeed, the demands of the victors for political guarantees against the recurrence of so foul a conspiracy against the tranquillity and equilibrium of Europe.

The course of the war and the political developments by which it has been accompanied in Central Europe have justified this estimate; but they have also shown that there may exist a fourth contingency from which the Habsburgs might hope to profit. It is with this contingency that the Allies are now confronted. Should Austria-Hungary, and her open and occult partisans, succeed in persuading the Allied Governments

that the leopard can change his spots, there might still be a chance that the adoption of a formula like "the federalisation of Austria" would save Germany from the full consequences of her crime by preserving in a new disguise the old Habsburg State which has been, is, and must remain a principal asset in German political calculations. Prominent German writers, notably Herr Georg Bernhard, in the *Vossische Zeitung* of April 23, have, it is true, clearly proclaimed the great value to Germany of a federalised Austria. "As long as Austria retained the ambition of being a German State," he wrote, "she was—or she might have become—a rival of Germany. But a strong, new, many-peopled Austria will be our complement." . . . "Changes in the home policy of the Dual Monarchy do not imply any change in its foreign policy, because the Monarchy can maintain the best relations with Germany and yet enjoy the confidence of the Entente." A federated Austria would be "a German bridge between West and East." The soundness of Herr Bernhard's views from the German standpoint cannot be gainsaid. It follows—or it ought to follow—that their unsoundness from the standpoint of the Allies, is equally incontestable.

The considerations that should guide the Allies in dealing with the question of Austria can be briefly stated. Quite apart from the liberal and humanitarian claims advanced in the name of "the rights of nationalities" or "the right of peoples to determine their own fate," it is evident

that the power of Germany to dispose of 50,000,000 Habsburg subjects for the furtherance of her military and political designs has been a main source of German strength. Of this source of strength Germany must be deprived. The creation of an independent Bohemia, or rather Czecho-Slovakia, would remove some 12,000,000 Habsburg Slav subjects from German control, and would set them up as active custodians of European freedom. Upon the economic resources of Bohemia Dr. Beneš rightly insists. Of the devotion of the Czechs to the Allied cause he gives abundant proof. The sturdy vitality of a people that has survived persecution and oppression almost without precedent in European history needs no demonstration. The unification of Poland would deprive Austria and Germany of many more millions of oppressed Slavs who, like the Czechs, would help to safeguard the liberties of Europe. Similarly, the constitution of an ethnically-complete Rumania, of a united Southern Slavia, and of a completed Italy, would subtract from 10 to 12 millions more from the Habsburg populations, hitherto at the disposal of the Hohenzollerns. The Magyars retaining independent possession of the Central Hungarian plain, the true Magyar-land, but deprived of the power to oppress non-Magyars might find their place in a Danubian Federation of States such as that of which Louis Kossuth once dreamed; while the Germans of Austria would be free, should they desire it, to join the peoples of the present German Empire. Their adhesion to Germany would not

xii BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

counterbalance the diminution of strength which the Hohenzollern-Habsburg combination would suffer by the liberation of the non-German and non-Magyar peoples whom the present "Central Powers" control.

These are the true lines of a lasting resettlement of Central Europe. In it an independent Bohemia would play a part of which the importance can be gauged only by those who know the history and the potentialities of the Bohemian lands and of the Czecho-Slovak race. As to the Habsburgs, who for so long have "clutched the hair of diverse populations," the words of the famous parody still hold good :—

They had their chance ; for so, in rough
All nations had beginning.
But Habsburgs were not wise enough
For any solid winning ;
Or else their task was over tough.

It is time that the peoples whom they have persistently misgoverned should be allowed to work out their own salvation ; and among these peoples the thrifty, industrious and gifted Bohemian race holds a place second to none.

HENRY WICKHAM STEED

LONDON, *June 25th*, 1917

BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

I

THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS: OUTLINE OF THEIR HISTORY

THE term Czecho-Slovaks, or simply the Czechs, includes two branches of the same nation: seven millions of Czechs living in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and three millions of Slovaks inhabiting the north of Hungary, from the junction of the River Morava and the Danube to the Upper Tisza. These two peoples have the same civilisation, the same language and history: the Slovak dialect hardly differs from the Czech, certainly much less than the Slovene from the Serbo-Croat. The only obstacle to their complete union is one of a political character, the Czechs being under the yoke of Austria, while the Slovaks are under that of Hungary and the Magyars.

Till the middle of the nineteenth century, the ties which held them together were very close, and some of the most illustrious pioneers of the Czech

2 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

renaissance were Slovaks. Towards the middle of the last century, certain Slovak patriots conceived the idea that in order to stir up the mass of the people to fight the Magyars, it would be advisable to abandon the Czech literary language, and adopt the local Slovak dialect. This separatist movement was accentuated by the establishment of the Austro-Hungarian dualism in 1867, which made the Slovaks members of another State, and completely separated them from the Czechs. This division of the two branches of the Czecho-Slovak nation has therefore existed only since the second half of the nineteenth century and has produced quite insignificant differences. By reason of their geographical position, the lot of the Slovaks has differed slightly from that of the Czechs; many of the sufferings which were inflicted on the Czechs were spared them, but on the other hand they sustained others which only indirectly affected the Czechs.

Briefly, the history of the Czecho-Slovaks may be summed up as follows :—

The Czech nation, inspired by a lofty idealism, has ever aimed throughout its history to attain to a high moral and religious conception of existence. Its activity has been concentrated on the search for moral and philosophical truths, and the realisation of ideals of justice and humanity. To this end the people of this nation have wished to live

in the peace that allows of the fulfilment of such aims.

But the attainment of this peace has been opposed by three foes : firstly, up to the fifteenth century, by the Germans ; secondly, by the Habsburg dynasty, who made use of the Germans in their endeavour to exterminate the Czechs ; finally, by the Magyars, the traditional allies of the Germans, who tried to extirpate the Slovaks.

Inhabiting the most western of the Slav territories, wedged deeply into the German block and surrounded by Magyars on the east, the position of the Czecho-Slovaks has made their history a history of perpetual struggle. There is not a single period in the history of this people which does not record a conflict with one or another of these three enemies. And the struggle continues.

It is a significant fact that to-day these three adversaries are considered the most malignant enemies of humanity : the history of the Czech nation shows that it was ever thus. If Europe to-day groans under the German-Austro-Magyar brutality, it must not be forgotten that the Czecho-Slovak nation has suffered under it for twelve hundred years. During these twelve centuries the Czechs were never the aggressors. With great difficulty they defended themselves, and only by

4 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

a miracle escaped the fate of their unhappy brother Slavs of the Elbe.

It must be confessed that fate was not kind in placing^e us in such circumstances. Let us take our enemies one by one and review the events of the struggle.

II

THE STRUGGLE OF THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AGAINST THE GERMANS

THE Czechs originally came and established themselves in the lands they now hold towards the end of the sixth, or in the seventh century A.D. From the beginning they were obliged to defend themselves against the attacks of the Germanic tribes, and history tells us of their struggles against Charlemagne.

The first of our national heroes, St Venceslas, had to fight the Teutonic people and was forced to pay them tribute. All his successors without exception found themselves in more or less violent conflict with the Germans. The Bohemian lands were continually threatened, especially by the Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire. Our national kings (Boleslav, Soběslav, Přemysl, Ottakar) were obliged to wage continuous war against the Teutons.

Until the fourteenth century the history of Bohemia is the history of wars against the Germans, while the history of the Southern Slavs records their struggles against the Turks. With the

6 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Czechs, the rôle of hereditary enemy was played by the Austro-Germans. Our earliest historical and literary documents, legends, customs, and traditions bear unmistakable traces of these struggles. Indeed, they colour our entire civilisation.

It was when the last king of the first autochthonous dynasty of the Premyslides died, and the kingdom of Bohemia passed to the House of Luxembourg, that Bohemia's most brilliant and glorious period commenced: it was her king, Charles IV., who, having been crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, continued to hold his Court at Prague, and contributed largely towards making Bohemia one of the intellectual centres of Europe. Not only did he promote the economical prosperity of his country, enlarge his territories, and embellish his capital of Prague with monuments of great artistic value, but he also founded the University of Prague, and thus gave birth to the great intellectual, moral, and religious movement from which arose John Hus, and with him the splendid period of the Hussite wars.

Without entering into details of these stirring times, we may state that the Czechs consider this period as one of the most glorious of their history. They gave Europe the man who began the fight for the freedom of individual conscience, John Hus. He was not only a religious reformer, he

was the initiator of that great philosophical movement which resulted in the French Revolution, and in the establishment of modern philosophical and political individualism. It is through John Hus that Bohemia is connected with the religious reformation in England, and with Wyckliff, as well as with the great thinkers of France.

It is common knowledge that he was burnt alive at Constance, and that the entire Czech nation rose up to avenge his death. The struggle, which contended above all things for liberty of conscience and religion, soon transformed itself into a fight against the Germans. On several occasions the latter invaded Bohemia with the object of exterminating the Czech heretics, but each time they were put to flight. Then the Czechs began to fight the German settlers who had penetrated into the interior of their country, and ended by almost freeing Bohemia of their presence. Thus the Hussite wars assumed a national character.

Since the fifteenth century these struggles of the Czechs against Germans have never ceased, only sometimes their character has been hidden or modified in appearance owing to Czech antagonism towards the Habsburg dynasty. At bottom, the struggle was Catholic against Protestant, but since the Germans were Catholics and the Czechs persisted in remaining heretics, the contest naturally assumed a racial character.

8 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Shortly after the Hussite wars, we see these struggles renewed under George of Poděbrad (1458-71), who during his entire reign defended Bohemia, like a true hero, against the invasions of the neighbouring German States.

III

THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AND THE HABSBURGS

OMITTING the short period of the reign of the two kings of the Polish Jagellon, we come to the fatal date 1526.

This was the date of the accession of the Habsburg dynasty in Bohemia, the most disastrous date in the whole history of the Czech nation. From this time onwards, their struggle for the liberty of conscience, for the right of religious freedom against the Germans was embittered by the enmity of the House of Habsburg and of the Magyars.

In accepting the doctrines of John Hus, the Czechs opened the door to religious reform; and when Luther adopted these same doctrines and created a new Protestant movement, it found a warm reception in Bohemia, where a large majority of the population became Protestant.

The vicissitudes of these religious wars in Europe, from the time of Luther to the end of the Thirty Years' War, are well known. Bohemia was always the battle-ground and suffered terribly in consequence.

10 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Living under an intolerant Catholic dynasty which for a long time in the Middle Ages was also the ruler of the German Empire, the Czech nation soon found itself in a desperate situation. The reigning dynasty resolved on the conversion of Bohemia to Catholicism, and to achieve this end called to their aid the Germans, who were hostile to us and who during the preceding centuries had been in continual conflict with us. Jealous of might, having an insatiable thirst for aggrandisement, and an unparalleled dynastic pride, and employing without hesitation any means which seemed most effectual, the House of Austria tried by every conceivable method to exterminate us.

When the Czechs in 1526 voluntarily accepted a prince of the House of Habsburg for their sovereign, they acted in complete independence. But the Habsburgs, becoming masters of Bohemia, determined to deprive the Czechs of their independence, both religious and political.

From the very outset of the Habsburg reign in Bohemia, an irreconcilable antagonism sprung up between the Crown and the nation, and a relentless conflict ensued of which the following gives some account :—

(a) THE EXTERMINATION OF THE CZECHS IN BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA

The three portions of the Austrian monarchy, that is to say, the Bohemian (Czech) lands, the

Austro-German provinces, and Hungary, united in 1526 under the sceptre of the Habsburgs, were essentially distinct and independent states. The person of the monarch was the only tie between these states, as each was absolutely independent of the other. It was therefore purely a personal union. The most important of these states was Bohemia, not only as regards the extent of her territory, but also on account of the part she played in the history of Europe, and by her feudal Constitution, which gave both her nobility and her cities important privileges tending to curtail the royal power. The hereditary Austrian lands have for a long time been in the hands of the Habsburgs, who exercised absolute power over them. This power, in fact, was almost unlimited by any rights or privileges of the Estates; the governmental functions were exclusively reserved to the sovereign, whose will was law. It was through these hereditary lands alone that Austria formed a part of the German Empire.

In Hungary the situation under the first of the Habsburgs was very different. On one side this country was harassed by war with the Turks, who occupied the greater part of the land; on the other side was Transylvania with her hereditary sovereign, who was the declared opponent of Ferdinand I. The power of the latter monarch, however, was very much limited by the old con-

12 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

stitutional laws passed by the Estates of the Diet in the preceding centuries, and confirmed by both history and tradition.

· It was only natural that the sovereign of these three states should wish to unite his dominions in a closer bond. In each state the constitutional conditions were different, and therefore the power of the monarch differently determined. Seeing that in one of these three states the power of the monarch was almost unlimited, that the Feudal System was on the decline, and that absolutist tendencies were at this period making themselves felt throughout Europe, it was natural that the monarch should endeavour to reduce the constitutions of the other two free states to the level of the institutions of the hereditary state. This singular situation favoured the dynastic pride of the Habsburgs, assisted them in the attainment of their aims, and encouraged them in their political ambitions. Thus, the history of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is the history of a conflict between these two combatants: on the one hand the Habsburgs, impelled by their dynastic ambitions, encouraged by the peculiar condition of their lands, fighting for a closer union between the three parts of their monarchy, and regardless of their original independence towards one another; on the other hand the Czech and Hungarian group, resisting these constant attacks and trying instead

to uphold their independence and to diminish the absolute power of the sovereign. While the lands of the Crown of St Venceslas, *i.e.* Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, fought unsuccessfully, Hungary, on the contrary, achieved a large measure of success.

The first Habsburg elected King of Bohemia in 1526 by the representatives of the Protestant Czech Estates in agreement with their Catholic colleagues, immediately showed his interpretation of the policy of the House of Austria. From the very beginning he inaugurated a new governmental régime in Bohemia, putting into practice his new ideas on the political organisation of the country, and on the functions of the feudal Diet and Estates. In view of the absolutist and dynastic tendencies of Ferdinand I. these Estates were not slow in showing their displeasure, and an open rebellion resulted.

Without difficulty Ferdinand suppressed the revolt. The rebel Estates, particularly the cities, were severely punished. Ferdinand then found an opportunity to increase the royal privileges, and he shrewdly exploited the defeat of the Czech revolt to assure to his family the hereditary right to the Crown of St Venceslas, and so render his dynasty independent of the Czech Estates. In addition he arrogated to himself some very important rights in the management of internal

14 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

affairs, consolidating his power, and affirming absolutist principles. He abolished the rights of the cities and their local autonomy, and imposed royal officials on them. His absolutism brought him universal hatred. But the nobles, gradually losing sight of the people's interests, no longer resisted, except for the selfish and personal interests of their class. Thanks to their attitude, Ferdinand easily succeeded in his work of centralisation and absolutism: at a moment when the towns were deprived of all power, the only force able to resist the self-seeking nobles was the dynasty, which was blinded by its family interests.

His successors continued his policy. During the sixteenth century the struggle between the Bohemian nobles and the Crown became more acute. The new religious quarrels of the Catholic dynasty against the Protestant heresy curiously complicated the old strife for the independence of Bohemia and the privileges of the nobles. At the commencement of the seventeenth century an abyss already separated the Czechs from the Habsburgs in consequence of the religious intolerance of the dynasty, and a second revolt of the Czechs against the House of Austria was on the point of breaking out. Finally, in 1619 the Czech Estates elected Frederic of the Palatinate for their king, and rose up against Ferdinand II.

Thus commenced the Thirty Years' War. The Czechs, defeated in the Battle of White Mountain near Prague, had to bear the terrible consequences of an abortive revolt.

The Battle of White Mountain marks the end of the first period of struggle between the Czech Estates and the Habsburgs. The victorious king, Ferdinand II., took care to turn his success to good account, as his predecessor, Ferdinand I., had done. He had twenty-seven Bohemian lords beheaded as leaders of the revolt. He exiled a large number of the Czech nobility, and confiscated their entire fortunes. He assured the final triumph of the Catholic Church in driving away from the country all those who refused to embrace Catholicism. In the ten years that followed the defeat, 659 nobles, all more or less powerful, were deprived of their fortunes and land property. The total value of these confiscations exceeded thirty millions of florins, that is to say nearly a milliard of our current money. The 112 feudal nobles, who till then had been independent, now became vassals of the Crown, and were deprived of all they possessed. The fines and confiscations imposed on the towns exceeded many millions.

Two-thirds of all feudal holdings and properties of the towns were confiscated. Indeed the victory of the Catholic Church and the Habsburgs was complete. The whole national and social organisa-

16 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

tion of Bohemia was changed: the Czech element eliminated from the upper classes, the aristocracy punished, fortunes confiscated, the gentry driven from the country, the middle classes obliged either to quit their native land or to become Catholic—in a word, the nation was decimated, demoralised, and reduced almost to ruin. Adventurers of all kinds came from every part of Europe to help the king in his war against Bohemia, and in place of the ancient Czech nobles a new aristocracy was created by the sovereign, who handed over to them the land of people suspected of heresy. This foreign aristocracy naturally showed itself very ready to fall in with the schemes of the Habsburgs, since its members received grants of land as a recompense for their docility; they made the feudal yoke weigh heavily upon the Czech nation, always using the defence of religion as a pretext for their oppression. There is no other nation known to history which has suffered a like vengeance from the hands of its lawful sovereign.

From the Battle of White Mountain flowed three principal results: the complete victory of the Habsburgs and the establishment of royal absolutism, the setting up of a new and foreign aristocracy, and the final triumph of the Catholic Church. These changes exercised a marked and lasting influence on the after-development of the country, which may easily be discerned to-day.

The new nobility as well as the dynasty succeeded in establishing in Bohemia the foundation of future power, a power which they continue to enjoy at the present time: the nobles are the masters in the present Diet of Bohemia, and the dynasty has succeeded in completely converting the people to Catholicism, and in maintaining its power in Austria as well as in Bohemia until to-day.

To legalise his terrible proceedings and definitely to subdue Bohemia, Ferdinand II. introduced, in 1620-27, a series of measures under the name of the "New Constitution," which became the foundation of public law in the Czech countries.

He found it necessary to modify in his favour some of the articles in the old Constitution, but it is evident that he could not do so legally, except through the medium of the Diet itself. But this constitutional revision was never submitted to the Diet. The Habsburgs were ever indifferent to their oaths to observe the laws of the country, and Ferdinand made these changes in an autocratic manner.

Thus the modifications wrought by him in the Constitution were a *coup d'état*, both illegal and anti-constitutional. One important innovation related to the question of languages. German became equal with Czech in the courts of law. This had disastrous consequences for the Czech

18 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

people and magistrates. During the eighteenth century this equality changed into a predominance of the German tongue, and Czech was only employed in certain formulæ used before the tribunals of the country and the Diet.

The Battle of White Mountain and the changes which followed it did much to promote the aims of the Habsburgs.

But from the constitutional point of view the principle of the independence of the Bohemian State remained intact. The King of Bohemia became a more absolute sovereign, but he always remained King of Bohemia. Legally the Czech State never ceased to exist. The Diet preserved its ancient constitutional rights, somewhat curtailed, yet in the main the same as before. The general parliament of all the lands of the Crown of St Venceslas remained a constitutional body. The disaster of 1620, followed by the New Constitution of 1627, did not destroy Bohemia's independence.

The Thirty Years' War, which followed the revolt of the Czech Estates, completed the ruin of Bohemia. At the commencement of the war Bohemia counted three million people, on the day of the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 she mustered only 800,000; and the devastation, havoc, and ruin of the country is difficult to picture. The war terminated in favour of the Habsburgs: Bohemia's

best sons, amongst others, Comenius and members of the Unity of Bohemian Brethren, abandoned by their allies, were obliged to take refuge for ever in exile. Ferdinand III., the successor of Ferdinand II., continued the persecution with even greater harshness; he increased the confiscations, and forced the best of the Czechs to leave their native land.

The Habsburg victors, determined to assure their power over the Czechs, who were ever ready to revolt, succeeded admirably. They banished nearly the whole of the population capable of resistance, and tried to exterminate the rest. They destroyed all Czech books, and persecuted without mercy all patriots who tried to defend Czech traditions. Their cold, calculating methods of destroying the Czech civilisation were only too successful.

One hundred and twenty years after the establishment of the New Constitution, when Maria Theresa accomplished a last *coup d'état* against the Constitution of the kingdom of Bohemia, the Czech nation had almost ceased to exist.

Such was the work of the first Habsburgs in Bohemia.

Let us now consider the second phase in their fight against the Czechs.

The successors of Ferdinand III. had only to continue the work of their predecessors: the

20 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Czechs were disarmed ; it only remained to legalise their subjugation. The New Constitution of Ferdinand II. had allowed the unity of the Czech lands to exist as a national, independent body, but the successors of Ferdinand practically succeeded in depriving them of the last remnant of their ancient independence.

By the Pragmatic Sanction, Charles VI. began definitely to assure to his dynasty the succession to the throne of Bohemia.

Then came Maria Theresa, who struck the final blow to the Czech State.

With the accession of Maria Theresa and Joseph II., the secular policy of the Habsburgs entered a new phase. Weakened by the extinction of the Spanish branch of the House, and by the failure of the Austrian dynasty to assure to itself the succession to the Spanish throne, eclipsed by the prestige of Louis XIV., threatened by the Turkish peril, and by the growing power and ambitions of the new Prussian State, the Habsburgs had to abandon their European policy and to adopt an exclusively Austrian one. Maria Theresa could no longer hope to enforce her policy on Europe ; all she could do was to defend her throne. At her succession the absolutism of the government was at its height ; the power of the Czech Estates was almost *nil*, and everything was ripe for complete centralisation.

Europe provided Maria Theresa with numerous examples of absolute and strongly centralised monarchies. Maria Theresa and Joseph II. could therefore easily take what measures they liked to ensure their absolutism and centralisation. These measures resulted in depriving Bohemia of her independence, a deprivation which was accepted in silence and without any protest amidst general indifference.

Maria Theresa only completed the work begun by the first Habsburg : she only hastened by her enlightened absolutism the slow march of the Czech constitution towards its ruin. She believed she had found in centralisation the only possible salvation for her monarchy against the attacks of Frederick II. Seeing the Prussian State, even at this period a centralised and bureaucratic machine, the working of which depended on the sole will of the monarch, and in whose hands the entire military, economic and financial organisation was concentrated, she attributed Frederick's military successes to this system of government. She therefore determined to follow his example, and to make her empire, or rather her three states, a single, centralised, uniform, and homogeneous State.

By her decisive act in 1749, followed later by a series of other measures, Maria Theresa completed the task undertaken by her House. She destroyed the last remaining institutions of the autonomous,

22 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

financial, and judicial administration in the Bohemian lands. By an autocratic and most arbitrary act she put an end to the existence of the Czech State.

Hungary in the course of her historic evolution found herself in a totally different situation. The Turkish peril, the existence of national and somewhat independent sovereigns in Transylvania, and the necessity of the Habsburgs to treat with consideration the Hungarian feudal Estates, assured the Magyars a form of government much in their favour, which soon became traditional, and thus spared them the fate of Bohemia.

The Czechs, who had twice rebelled, were always a target for hostilities on the part of the Crown, and were reduced to impotence. The relations between the Habsburgs and Hungary, however, were very different, and thus the first foundations of the Austro-Hungarian dualism were laid.

This dualism, which only received its official shape in 1867, and which was a concomitant of the centralisation and Germanisation of Austria (Cisleithania), was only the consequence of a very natural and very slow evolution, and the result of special conditions in the past.

Thus the actual Austro-Hungarian Empire, in its dualistic form, is the logical result of those fatalities and injustices which have gradually eaten away the political organism governed by the

Habsburgs. Those nations who, in the beginning, had allowed their rights to be violated, were now paying the price, and being forced to submit to a constant abuse of power on the part of the monarchy. We may sum up the actual situation as follows: Germanisation and centralisation in Cisleithania (Austria), Magyarisation and centralisation in Transleithania (Hungary); the union of these two elements, German and Magyar, against the Slavs and Latins; a European war to hasten and facilitate their extermination.

The Czechs have never recognised or accepted this *coup d'état*. Up to the present day they consider all the constitutional measures taken by Maria Theresa as illegal and non-existing. They have never renounced the rights of their country, though outraged by sovereigns and abolished by measures absolutely anti-constitutional. Even when the era of the modern Constitution commenced (in 1848 and again in 1867) they persisted in claiming their ancient Constitution of the kingdom of Bohemia, and with it their independence.

Austria has never existed *de jure* for the Czechs; not one of the Czech national parties has renounced its claims, and even to-day the Czech parties in Bohemia are bringing forward the programme of the independence of the kingdom of Bohemia to set against the enterprise of a Pan-German Central Europe.

24 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

The reforms begun by Maria Theresa were continued with great persistency by Joseph II. To achieve the centralisation of the monarchy, Joseph II. endeavoured, with the aid of the centralist^s bureaucracy, to make of different-speaking peoples a single nation, speaking exclusively German, and to destroy anything that prevented him from imposing his will on the people. He followed this aim, not only in Cisleithania, but also in Hungary. Of all the Habsburgs, he alone, strange to say, was inspired by abstract ideas of enlightened absolutism, and a keen desire to serve his people rather than his dynasty.

And he it was who, when not imbued with hostile sentiments against us, even though we were Czechs, understood his mission so well that he even tried to make us happy while assassinating, or rather trying to exterminate us as a nation. Happily his political measures had an unexpected effect. The ideas resulting from the French Revolution were now beginning to spread throughout Europe, and had penetrated also into Austria. The individualistic philosophy was liberating the individual consciousness, and influencing directly the life and liberty of nations. The downfall of the Feudal System and the coming of democracy confirmed the right of citizens, and through them the rights of oppressed nationalities. In Bohemia

the doctrines of the encyclopædists, of Voltaire, of Rousseau, and of Herder, soon became popular, and gave to a few Czech patriots, who had never lost hope in the future of their people, a means of reviving the nation, seemingly dead for more than a century. The brutal acts of Joseph II. and the oppressive measures of his successors, Leopold II. and Francis I., and the Metternich régime, also helped to bring about a salutary reaction, which led to the regeneration of the nation.

We now come to the period when a small handful of enlightened men, the Czech "awakeners," by means of books written in Czech or translated from other languages began to spread the knowledge of the glorious past of Bohemia among the people ; after seventy years of work they succeeded in creating a real revival of the Czech nation.

In 1848 the nation was able to celebrate its renaissance. It immediately threw itself into the political struggle. Inspired by the recollection of the ancient independence of the Crown of St Venceslas, and relying on the principle of the right of nationalities, the Czechs took part in the revolutionary movement, and sought to free their country.

They demanded autonomy for the Bohemian lands. And this was the beginning of the constitutional struggles.

(b) THE POLITICAL STRUGGLES OF THE
RESUSCITATED NATION

At first the Czechs and the Germans living in Bohemia took common part in the revolutionary campaign against Metternich's absolutism. But before long the Germans perceived that Czech independence would leave them in a minority. The famous Frankfort Parliament had just assembled, and was propagating amongst the Germans ideas which it is wise to remember, especially to-day, in order to understand the dangers which have threatened the Czechs in every decisive period of European history.

It was to Frankfort that in 1848 were turned the eyes of all Germans who cherished the desire for liberty, who were imbued with the idea of the rights of nations, and who suffered in seeing the incoherence and discord which reigned in Germany and which encouraged the absolutism of the governments in the different German States. Their dream was to unite in a great and free Germany all the lands inhabited by Germans from the Baltic to the Adriatic. The German Liberals were disposed to give this new Germany the form of a monarchy, while the Radicals desired a republic. This movement soon assumed considerable proportions, and spread throughout Austria, being specially strong at Vienna, where absolutism was

more pronounced than anywhere else, and where consequently the liberal revolutionaries were quite disposed to accept help from outside.

Since the fall of Napoleon ideas relating to the rights of nations had not ceased to occupy the public mind; the desire for a national, homogeneous State, which is the very foundation of the regeneration of the Slavs in Austria, inspired the German patriots themselves, and the same inspiration was kindled as well in Greece, Belgium, and Italy. This movement in Germany, therefore, reflected the general situation in Europe. But this dream of a Greater Germany entirely lost its original form, and, if realised, would have been contrary to the principles which gave it birth.

In fact the Pan-Germans of Frankfort wished to include in the new and Greater Germany all the countries which were classed by the Vienna Congress in 1815 in the German Confederation, countries which by their history and traditions were completely foreign to Germany, and of which the majority of the population were Slav or Italian. By this are meant principally Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Carniola, and the Littoral (Dalmatian Coast), not to mention Venetia and Italian Lombardy, which were working for the realisation of Italian national unity. The non-German population of these countries could not possibly

28 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

have any enthusiasm for this Teuton dream, and would not at any cost be confounded with the German lands of the new Germany.

It was the programme of the Frankfort Parliament that gave rise to the first serious conflict between the Czechs and the Germans of Bohemia : perhaps even to all the Czech struggles in 1848 and subsequent years. The incorporation of the Crown of St Venceslas in the German Union meant for the Czechs, as well as for the Cisleithanian Slavs, the beginning of the end, the loss of their national rights, and the renouncement of all they had gained by their renaissance. It was in direct contradiction to the principles which gave birth to their movement of emancipation, and the Czechs opposed it by virtue of the same principles that were invoked by the Germans, and which were to bring about the realisation of the Pan-German Union.

All the promises made by the German Liberals and the Commission of Fifty of Frankfort did not delude the Czechs, who had now become suspicious. On the other hand the Magyars were favourably disposed towards the German plan, for the inclusion of Cisleithania in the German Union meant the rupture of all ties which held Hungary to Austria, and the complete liberation of the Magyars would inevitably have followed.

This situation was full of danger for the Czechs

and the other Slavs of Austria and Hungary. The success of this plan would have meant that the Czechs and the Southern Slavs would be sacrificed to Germany, on whose Liberalism they naturally could not rely ; while, on the other hand, the Serbians, Croats, Rumanians, and, more important for the Czechs, the three millions of Slovaks would be handed over to the domination of the Magyars, who had never shown the least tolerance for the feelings of other nationalities in Hungary. In a constitutional and federalist Austria, the Slavs would naturally form a majority ; but in a German Union and an independent Hungary, they would be in a minority, oppressed, deprived of their rights, doomed to the ruin from which they had only just escaped half a century before.

Hence the Czech policy was logically anti-German and anti-Magyar : it was Austrian and dynastic. A powerful Austria was their only hope : Austria of the Habsburgs, who had never shown them any consideration, who had never tried to do justice to their claims, and who, for many centuries, had pursued an anti-Slav policy.

It was a question of Austria's existence. The absolutist dynasty considered the Pan-German propaganda dangerous, fearing both the boldness of the German Liberal and Radical Republicans of Frankfort and the absorption of Austria, which would have resulted from the realisation of their

30 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

plans. The dynasty would therefore consent to the German Union only on condition that Austria were predominant. She felt only repugnance for a free Germany, where the governments of the different States would be negligible, and where Austria could not play the leading part.

Under these conditions, the dynasty ought to have taken the side of the Slavs, but she did nothing of the sort, as it was against all her past traditions and policy. The government hesitated, its actions were inconsistent and indecisive. But, faithful to their former ideal of a Greater Germany with Austria at the head, and supported by the Southern Catholic states, the Habsburgs decided to participate at any cost in the formation of the new Germany, in order to secure precedence for themselves over their Prussian rivals. So they decided to suppress the Slav movement, which would have compromised Austria in the eyes of her German friends. In fact, an Austria where the Slav element was uppermost could never aspire to be at the head of purely German States.

These dynastic plans forced the government, first to remain inactive, then definitely to take side with the Germans against the Slavs. On the 25th and 29th April 1848 the constituents were called upon to elect the delegates for the Frankfort Parliament.

The Czechs were annoyed. They emphatically

refused a union with Germany. The controversy on the subject of the Frankfort Parliament became still more violent, and the ill-feeling between the Czechs and the Germans more manifest.

The attitude of the Czechs was clearly shown in Palacký's famous letter addressed to the Commission of Fifty, in answer to an invitation to take part in the work of preparing the Constituent Assembly. In this letter he contested the German assertion that Bohemia had always belonged to Germany. The relations between Bohemia and Germany were, according to his opinion, only an understanding between the sovereigns, not between the peoples. The efforts of the Parliament were directed against the independence of Austria, and were therefore threatening the existence of the Slav nationalities. Palacký then gave the above-mentioned arguments as the grounds on which the Czechs abstained from participating in the formation of the new Germany. In this letter the political programme of all the Czechs and Austrian Slavs of 1848 was clearly set forth, and it was then that Palacký used his celebrated and so often quoted sentence, "In truth, if the Austrian State had not already existed, we ought in the interest of Europe, and even of humanity itself, to work for its establishment." Later on, when Palacký realised how completely the Habsburgs had given the Slavs over to the Germans, he completed his

32 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

phrase by another statement, " We existed before Austria, and shall exist after her."

This period of the Czech policy was the last attempt at reconciliation between the Czechs and the Crown. Once again the Habsburgs had betrayed them, and sacrificed them without scruple to the Germans, and to their own selfish dynastic plans.

Seeing that for the present it was impossible to constitute a Greater Germany placed under their hegemony, the Habsburgs retired from the scene and prepared for a new struggle. After vain attempts to establish a constitution, they resorted again to absolutism, a rule which lasted till 1860, and the proceedings so dear to the two Ferdinands of the seventeenth century were once again used in the struggle against the Czechs. Military disasters at last obliged Francis Joseph arbitrarily to decree a constitution to his people. In 1860 he promised in the October Diploma to establish a constitutional rule, based on federalist principles. The Czechs, forced to renounce all hope of the reconstitution of the Czech countries in the form of an independent State, joined to the other Austrian provinces only by the person of the Emperor, demanded as a minimum programme a constitution in which the different provinces of the Empire, and particularly the Bohemian lands, would enjoy a large measure of autonomy. In a

word they wished for a federal Austria, without renouncing for ever the realisation of their supreme goal—the complete independence of their country.

But the constitution granted by the Emperor in February 1861 was, on the contrary, essentially centralistic; moreover, the system of election sought to reduce the Slav element throughout the Empire to impotence. The throne continued its historic aim of uniting under its sceptre the whole of Greater Germany—and this programme necessitated the annihilation of all the Slavs.

Even the defeat of Sadova did not put an end to this mad policy, and after Sadova the Court of Vienna would not renounce its hegemony in the German lands, and began to think of revenge. However, worn out by war and internal struggles, the Habsburgs were obliged to grant concessions to the Magyars, and in 1867 the Emperor consented to divide the Monarchy into two States each under a centralised government. This was, after all, the inevitable and final act of a historic evolution. This combination had the advantage for Francis Joseph and the Magyars of subduing the Slavs. The Austrian Slavs were given over to the Germans, those of Hungary to the Magyars. *Divide et impera* was always the motto of the Viennese government.

Then the fight between the Czechs and Vienna began anew. The creation of the German Empire

34 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

under the hegemony of Prussia caused the Austrian government to reflect, and ask itself if it would not be better to modify its policy and shape it differently. In 1871 Francis Joseph opened negotiations with the Czechs and solemnly promised to satisfy their demands. A new era seemed on the point of dawning in Austria.

But the inveterate enemies of the Slavs, the Germans and the Magyars, energetically opposed this policy.

Berlin intervened, and the Magyars openly declared that they would never tolerate an autonomous Bohemia, dangerous to their domination of the Slovaks.

The Habsburgs betrayed us once more, and as a punishment for daring to show our dissatisfaction, General Koller was on two occasions despatched to Bohemia, with full power to subdue us by massacres, imprisonments, and every persecution possible.

During the last thirty years the Czechs adopted new political tactics; instead of open rebellion, they prepared in silence for more propitious days. They worked at their economic development, at the enlargement of their political influence; by degrees they occupied important posts in the administration, and succeeded in obtaining new rights for the use of their language and their schools; they strengthened the local autonomy

and improved public instruction. Very successful in this new campaign, they at the same time opposed strenuously the pretension of the Germans and Magyars to administer the whole internal organisation of the Monarchy. The details of these quarrels are well known, and it is unnecessary to recall that the parliaments of Vienna and Budapest were never able to sit regularly on account of Slav obstruction.

In Hungary the reign of violence is still better known. Since 1867, when the Magyars became absolute masters of the country, the situation of the non-Magyar nationalities has been intolerable. The Slovaks up till now have not had even primary national schools, to say nothing of secondary or high schools. The Magyars tried to denationalise the Slovak people by the most violent means. All law appointments were reserved solely for Magyars, and political persecutions became innumerable. The Press was barely able to subsist, muzzled, suppressed, and materially impoverished as it was. The economic development of the Slovaks was systematically obstructed by the most treacherous proceedings. The local administration was completely in the hands of the Magyars, while the Slovaks, who number some three millions, had just two members to represent them in the Parliament of Budapest before the war.

In fact, the same absolutist régime was in practice

36 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

on both sides of the Leitha, and with the same brutality ; and it was this very absolutism which served to unite the Magyar and German cause.

It is for these reasons that the Habsburg Monarchy always remained so unstable, and that all Europe was convinced that the first great shock would break up the State. It is for these reasons that internally everything was in such a state of confusion and disorder, that the different nationalities, pitted one against another, only desired the destruction of this political and social organism, which was so obviously moribund, and which, by its structure, organisation, traditions, and system of government deserved nothing better than to be swept off the map of the world.

When war broke out, our struggle was in full swing. Our political parties had never renounced their ancient national programme, and as soon as the first shot at Belgrade was fired, a single voice rang out throughout the Czech countries : " This war will at last deliver us from the yoke of the Habsburgs, the Germans, and the Magyars."

It was the internal situation which finally drew Austria into the war. She had never accepted the federalist programme. The actual system could no longer continue because of the Slav resistance, which was growing ever more powerful. At all costs this resistance had to be broken. The war of 1870 had considerably modified the

foreign policy of the monarchy. Bismarck with remarkable perspicacity had refused to deprive Austria of her German provinces. He sought thus to realise indirectly, but surely, the Pan-German plan, by gaining the whole of Austria-Hungary. He foresaw the time when the internal conditions of this Empire would force its two constituent nations to call in the help of Prussia, and throw themselves into her arms. To assure better the success of his plan, he directed the ambition of Austria towards the Balkans, by assigning her two new Yugo-Slav provinces, at the same time indicating to her the road to Salonika. Austria, with her Slav population ever increasing, and her internal situation still more unstable, decided to pursue at all costs her dynastic and imperialistic policy in order to save the German and Magyar character of the Dual Monarchy. Thus Vienna saw herself forced to accept the hegemony of Prussia—Austria willingly became the vanguard of the German *Drang nach Osten*, and her government prepared and let loose the present catastrophe.

This, in essence, is our history and the prelude to the gigantic struggle of to-day.

IV

THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AND THE MAGYARS.

A LEGEND TO BE DESTROYED

Now we must speak of our last adversary, the Magyars. The Slovaks had always lived in close relation with the Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia. At the end of the ninth century they were united under the sceptre of a national prince, and formed the Empire of Great Moravia, when, suddenly in 907, the Magyars invaded their country.

This invasion had serious consequences. The Northern Slavs were separated from their Yugo-Slav brothers, and the Magyars became neighbours of the Germans. From this period commenced the struggles of the Czechs with the Magyars. The Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia always resisted successfully and remained independent, but the Slovaks who occupied the region north of the Danube, in Hungary proper, found themselves in a painful situation as, geographically, the invasion of their country was easy. So in 1025 the Magyars succeeded in taking possession of Slovakia.

Since this date the country has remained under Magyar domination, but it has for several reasons always preserved its Czech and Slav character. The Magyars, repulsed on the Hungarian plains, had not sufficient moral and material strength to assimilate or to dominate this population, while on the other hand a pacific penetration was impossible for the Magyars who had remained too Oriental. Moreover, the Czechs soon began to make common cause with the Magyars against the Turkish peril.

From the end of the thirteenth century this union continued with little intermission, until the succession of the Jagellon dynasty (1471) rendered it almost permanent. The succession of the Habsburgs to the Bohemian and Magyar throne resulted in the Czechs and Slovaks finding themselves part of the same State. This greatly facilitated the economical, political, and especially the intellectual development of both branches of the Czecho-Slovak nation, and thereby saved the existence of the Slovaks and the national unity of the Czechs.

Moreover, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, when the Austro-Hungarian nationalities were beginning to rouse themselves, the Slovaks immediately recognised their racial union with the Czechs and co-operated with them. On their side, the Czechs opposed the dismemberment of

40 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Austria for the benefit of the Magyars in 1848, wishing to preserve their political relations with the Slovaks. So they fought together for the federalism of Austria-Hungary in order to unite the Czechs and Slovaks in a single independent national group. The Slovaks derived a great advantage from their geographical position; and in the great fight against the House of Austria, which ended so tragically for the Czechs, they escaped some of the persecutions and sacrifices the latter had to endure from the Habsburgs; it is owing to this that they were able more easily to preserve their national traditions and play such an important part in the regeneration of the Czechs at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In 1848 began a new era for the national life of the Slovaks and the development of the relations between the Czechs and Magyars. Austria-Hungary was shaken by the revolution, and the Magyars to free themselves, undertook an armed fight against Vienna.

From the very beginning, the Austro-Hungarian Slavs fought for national, political, and constitutional liberty; they feared German and Magyar ambitions.

First of all, the Czechs rose up against the Pan-Germanistic Germans of Frankfort, while the Slovaks and Croats opposed the Magyar revolution,

for, as was natural, they realised immediately that an independent Hungary under Magyar domination meant death to the Slavs, especially to the Slovaks.

For a long time the Magyars were believed in England and France to be the enemies of the Viennese Court and the champions of liberty, justice, and independence. Sympathies were shown to a people who, formerly oppressed, had been able in 1848 to throw off the yoke and raise the revolutionary flag. The respect which such energy called forth allowed them to pursue their political plans in 1861-1867, and even to the present day the outside world does not realise that for a long time they have been no longer an oppressed nation, but on the contrary have assumed the character of a most cruel and unscrupulous oppressor. They have emancipated themselves from Vienna to become the executioners of Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, and Rumanians, not to mention Ruthenes. Still the old belief in them remained, thanks to the manœuvres of the able Magyar politicians. They had the power in their hands, as well as force and money. They bought up the Press, published books, reviews, and newspapers. Their propaganda represented the Magyars as the foremost pioneers of civilisation. Moreover, their rich aristocracy contracted ties with most countries and had the entrée to the political centres of all

42 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

nations ; thus, helped by old tradition, they easily gained sympathies in England and France.

All we have experienced since 1848 has given us good reason for fear. There were never worse oppressors than the Magyars. It would need columns to detail all that the Slovaks have suffered under the yoke of the Magyars. Everything was refused them ; political rights, rights to found schools, freedom to use their own language. There are hardly any elementary Slovak schools, and no secondary or high schools. Liberty of the Press does not exist, and it would be difficult to-day to find a single Slovak publicist who, having openly worked for the Slovak cause, has not several times made acquaintance with Magyar prisons. The three million Slovaks are represented by only three members in the Parliament at Budapest. Hungary still lives under an Oriental régime. Lack of space alone prevents me from recounting the long series of cruelties committed by the Magyars against the Slovaks and Yugo-Slavs.

For more than half a century they have employed every means to Magyarise the Slovaks. In certain districts they succeeded. They still persist in the attempt, for they feel that their domination is being menaced by the political, economical, and intellectual progress of the Czechs. The dualism which was to crush at the same time the Czechs and the Slovaks is their work. Whenever the

Czechs were on the point of obtaining some concession or other from Vienna, it was always the Magyars, as in 1871, who prevented it. They are of necessity the traditional and most faithful allies of the German, and their whole national and political existence depends on this alliance. It is on them principally that the responsibility falls, of letting loose the present war.

The Balkan policy of the Monarchy was above all things a Magyar policy. The war against Serbia was brought about more by Hungary, who possessed over four million of Serbo-Croats, than by Austria, who counted only one million. The efforts to unite the Yugo-Slavs, endangered Hungary above all. The Customs war waged against Serbia since 1907 operated to the profit of the Hungarian landowners, but to the detriment of the Austrian industries. The Magyars claimed the sole right to exploit Bosnia and Herzegovina, and moreover considered the road to Salonika and the Ægean Sea as their privilege.

All the persecutions of the Serbo-Croats in Slavonia and in Croatia since 1907 have been their work, and it was they who engineered the famous Agram trial. After all, there are only eight million Magyars in Hungary, and, therefore, they are almost in a minority against the Slavs alone, without counting the Rumanians. The political and economic development of the Slav nations

44 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

was already beginning to threaten the Magyar domination; they were insisting on universal suffrage, which would have completely deprived the Magyars of their predominance. For the Magyars there was only one possible solution of all these problems: that was a victorious war. Accordingly, when the Crown Council in July 1914 decided on the declaration of war with Serbia, it was Tisza and the Magyar nobles who gave the decisive vote.

One need not further be surprised at the actual part they played, for it is they who are "the third great culprits" of this war.

When the day of punishment, which will certainly come, strikes the great criminals of this war, the Germans, Europe must not forget their most faithful associates, the Magyars. Not only Austria must be dismembered, but also, and above all, Hungary, according to the principle of nationality. The Magyars and Germans must be separated and limited to the territory inhabited by them, and the Slavs delivered from their intolerable hegemony.

V

THE PAN-GERMAN PLAN: THE SLAVS OF ANCIENT AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AND ITALY

HOW THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE HABSBURG MONARCHY FAVOURED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRUSSIAN AND PAN-GERMAN PLANS OF BERLIN

FOR more than twenty years all German politicians, scientists, writers, journalists, and economists have been haunted by the dream of making Germany a world-power—*Eine Weltmacht*. The great development of the navy of the Empire under William II. was the most significant manifestation of this vision. For some time the governing powers in Berlin hesitated as to which direction the German expansion should take. Should they launch out into a colonial policy, and dispute the territories in Asia, Africa, and South America with the other Powers? At first the German imperialists thought of creating a colonial empire, similar to that of England, of Russia, and of France; but every successive attempt to lay hands on Central Africa, China, part of South America or Morocco entirely failed.

Then German ambitions were fixed on the Balkans, the Mediterranean, and Turkey, in accordance with the ancient conceptions of Paul de Lagarde and Liszt. The realisation of this plan, abandoned for a certain time, has become during the last ten years the essential aim of the Pan-German policy. It was completed by the German designs on the colonial empire of England. The Berlin-Baghdad railway menaced on one side India, on the other side Cairo and Egypt; it had its branches to Aden through Arabia, and to Cairo to reach Egypt.

In fact, the German imperialists based their action on three maxims:—

(1) Germany must be assured of abundant commercial outlets for her products.

(2) She must possess territories rich enough to provide her with all the raw materials indispensable to her industries, since her geographical position makes it unwise for her to be dependent on other States for these necessities.

(3) She must have at her disposal territories large enough to absorb her surplus population, so that Germans obliged to emigrate from their country may thus avoid denationalisation in alien countries.

A State which aspires to become a world power must fulfil these three essential conditions. The attempt to realise these three conditions brought Germany to throw in her lot with Turkey.

It was the famous phrase—Central Europe—*Mittel-Europa*—which made plain the consequences of this project, a project opposed to the death by the Slavs and the Western Powers, and which could be only achieved after their complete subjugation.

The political situation of Central Europe was singularly favourable to the new Pan-German plan. As I have already stated the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was in full process of disintegration. The Germans in Austria and the Magyars in Hungary only maintained their power under the most precarious conditions and by the most tyrannical proceedings. The Germans were alarmed by the progress made by the Czechs, the Yugo-Slavs, and the Poles; the Magyars were beginning to feel their impotency in face of the growing Yugo-Slav and Czecho-Slovak national movement, and feared the increasing power of Russia. In Bulgaria, German intrigues stirred up old grudges against the Serbs. In Turkey, the Young Turks, who only maintained their power with the help of the Germans, counted on them to resist the Russian pretensions to Constantinople and to check all the English and Italian claims and demands, which would cause the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

Lastly, the immensity of Russian territory and the ever-increasing size of the Russian population

filled the Germans with anxiety and incited them to try and reduce to impotence a neighbour so embarrassing to their ambitions.

The Germans also held a trump card in their game in having a Coburg on the throne of Bulgaria, a Hohenzollern at Bucarest, and another relation of their Emperor at Athens. The Rumanians feared the Russians, and Athens hated them because of Constantinople. As early as 1912 Ferdinand of Coburg was working for Berlin, at a moment when he was preparing to attack Turkey. At this period he asked Vienna and Berlin to intervene against the Serbs, intending to seize Macedonia and part of Serbia and offering to put his enlarged kingdom at the service of the Germans to promote their domination in the Balkans.

This series of advantageous circumstances encouraged Germany immediately to attempt a supreme effort. Instead of appropriating a few Austro-German provinces, according to the old Pan-German plans, with a view to a dismemberment of Austria, it was now a question of including the whole of Austria and the Balkans with the Adriatic and Turkey, in short to make of Germany a real world-power, menacing India and Egypt.

However, Germany found four great obstacles in her way :—

First of all Serbia. Serbia, by her very exist-

ence, constituted a constant menace to the monarchy of the Habsburgs and the Magyar oligarchy. It was therefore as necessary for Germany as for Austria-Hungary to crush Serbia, and this was the aim of the present war.

The second obstacle were the Czecho-Slovaks, whose increasing national spirit, growing in proportion to the development of their material prosperity, was becoming a more and more perturbing element in the Dual Monarchy. Since the Czecho-Slovaks would never consent to enter into a closer union with Prussia, it was necessary for the Prussians to get rid of them.

The Serbs were therefore to be crushed and divided between Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria ; The Czecho-Slovak nation was to be radically suppressed by a *coup d'état* which was being secretly prepared in Austria ; Galicia was to be administratively detached from Austria, so as to destroy the Slav majority. The Czech countries would then be the subject of an administrative reorganisation ; the delimitation of districts would have to be modified, universal suffrage abrogated, all the seven millions of Czechs completely drowned in the German flood. Everything would be Germanised : the German language would be official, the Diets in Czech countries would be abolished, and Austria (Cisleithania) would be turned into a State as centralised as Hungary, where the Slovaks

would soon succumb under a still more systematic pressure.

The Poles, who were the third obstacle, were to be appeased—on one side by obtaining autonomy in Galicia, which would remain Austrian, but with a special constitution; and on the other side by the formation of a kingdom of Russian Poland, under the influence of Germany. In return they were definitely to renounce their claims to Polish territories in Prussia. It was a programme in complete opposition to the principle of the union of the whole Polish people. Since these lines were written for the first time in March 1916, all these plans for Poland have been realised.

The fourth obstacle was Italy.

She was Austria's traditional rival and claimed the irredentist provinces. She had her interests in the Balkans, which were in constant conflict with those of Austria-Hungary and Germany and directly opposed to the realisation of the Pan-German plan. She looked to Valona and claimed Trieste, which was jealously guarded by Austria and Germany, because it was by Trieste that Germany was preparing her outlet to the Adriatic, and it was at Trieste that an important branch of the famous German railway, Hamburg-Persian Gulf (Berlin-Baghdad), terminated.

Italy was therefore necessarily an enemy, perhaps the principal and most dangerous one, because

she was the most powerful. With the Czecho-Slovaks and the Yugo-Slavs she completely blocked the road of the Germans and Magyars towards the East.

The Pan-German plan was therefore essentially founded on the crushing of Serbia, the humiliation of Italy, and the complete annihilation of the national aspirations and hopes of the oppressed nations of Austria-Hungary, above all of the Czecho-Slovaks. No more odious or cynical enterprise against human liberty was ever conceived.

All these calculations presuppose the existence of Austria-Hungary. Turkey is too unstable to exist alone. The Germans have undertaken to take care of her. The road between Berlin and Constantinople had to be defended by faithful watch-dogs: this duty was to be confided to the Germans and Magyars of Austria-Hungary and to the Bulgarians in the Balkans. The customs union of Central Europe was destined to put the economic exploitation of these vast territories into the hands of Germany, and so render the Germans absolute masters of Central Europe. Germany cannot dispense with Austria-Hungary, which plays an essential part in the realisation of her elaborate plan, not only from the military point of view, with her support of fifty-one millions of inhabitants and nearly six millions of soldiers and the resources of a vast country, but principally

52 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

as regards her help in the Germanisation and the progressive domination of the different elements of the Czecho-Slovak, Polish, Yugo-Slav, Italian, and Rumanian nationalities. The Prussians alone could not undertake such a vast enterprise.

Such is the German plan, and the signification of the German watch-word "Central Europe"; such is the part played by the Habsburg Monarchy in the attack which the Teutonic powers have prepared against all of us, against the Czecho-Slovaks as against the Yugo-Slavs, against France as against England. And this is how the problem of Central Europe presents itself to all who are in conflict with the ancient empire of Austria-Hungary.

VI

THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AND THE WAR, 1914

(a) THE ATTITUDE OF THE CZECH NATION AND THE CONDUCT OF CZECH SOLDIERS

It is therefore obvious that the German plan, as well as the Austro-Hungarian policy of violence, was solely based on the annihilation of the Czecho-Slovaks. It is therefore perfectly comprehensible that from the very commencement of the war the Czechs sided against Austria-Hungary. The whole nation immediately realised that the victory of Germany and Austria would signify the realisation of the Pan-German dream—the taming of Austria and its subservience to Germany.

Immediately after the mobilisation, they undertook to thwart the plans of Berlin and Vienna. By reason of their geographical and political situation they were only able to offer a passive resistance, which nevertheless rendered a great service to the Allies.

All political parties refused to swear loyalty to Austria. The people did not conceal their hostility towards the government, which several times provoked brutal repressions; the Press, in spite

54 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

of the censorship, fought its uttermost against Austria in making known to the public by allusions and hints the true situation, and in cleverly bringing to light the contradictions and lies of the official information. The population flatly refused to subscribe to the war loans or to deliver up the reserve of foodstuff, thus helping to bring about the financial bankruptcy of the Monarchy and rendering the blockade of the Central Empires more efficient. And, finally, the Czech soldiers—and this is the most important service that the Czechs have been able to render the Allies in this war—systematically refused to march and fight for Austria. Thus they contributed in the most effective manner to the disasters of Austria-Hungary during the first year of the war, and they were able to disorganise almost completely the Austro-Hungarian army.

One must examine the behaviour of the Czech soldiers in detail from the very commencement of the war to understand the part they have played in checking the Austro-German combinations. From the first day of mobilisation the reserves from the small towns and country openly showed their attitude. In the outskirts of Pilsen, there were mass demonstrations and the soldiers openly declared that they would turn their arms against the officers and the Germans. Many arrests were made, and certain death

sentences pronounced as early as the first days of August 1914.

Contrary to the expectations of the government, these executions did not succeed in intimidating the Czechs. Towards August 10th, demonstrations recommenced at Prague. All the Czech soldiers, without exception, thought it their sacred duty to make known to their compatriots their hostile sentiments towards Austria, and they openly vowed to each other not to fire on the Russians or Serbs and to surrender at the first opportunity.

From the month of August till the winter of 1914 we daily witnessed these demonstrations of the Czech soldiers, demonstrations which, according to the military authorities, constituted the crime of high treason. In September 1914 the attitude of the 8th regiment of the Czech Landwehr, recruited from the outskirts of Prague and sent to the front against the Russians, provoked sanguinary riots. Soldiers singing national songs refused to enter the station, ill-treated their German officers, grievously wounded their commander, and at last massed themselves inside the station and refused to entrain. The German 75th Regiment was then called out to force them into the carriages.

As a result of these incidents the War Minister forbade under the most severe penalties the Czech

soldiers to carry the colours and standards. Since then every company of Czech soldiers going to the station of Prague for the front is escorted by a double number of German and Magyar soldiers. Nobody is allowed to speak to them as they pass through the streets, or to say "Good-bye," or even to smile at them, and the German soldiers who march on either side of the Czech soldiers see to it that no such crime is committed—and punishments are reserved for any offenders.

The Czech soldiers, however, took their revenge as soon as they got on the battlefield, and acted in conformity with their sentiments. The 11th Czech Regiment of the town of Pisek, who refused to march on Valjevo in Serbia, was on two different occasions decimated. The rest were put in the front of Serbian guns and finally crushed by the Magyar artillery, who seeing themselves in danger thus cruelly revenged themselves on the Czechs.

The 36th Regiment of Mladá Boleslav were mutinous in barracks and were consequently massacred; the 88th Regiment, who attempted to surrender in the Carpathians, succumbed to the cross fire of the Prussian Guards and the Magyar Honveds. The 35th Regiment from the town of Pilsen, sent by train to the battlefield of Galicia, found themselves half an hour after their arrival in the Russian trenches, where they were enthusiastically received. A part of the regiment who

did not succeed in reaching the Russians were massacred by the Austrians and the Prussians.

After the second Battle of Lemberg and when Przemysl was taken for the first time, the Czech soldiers, seeing the disorganisation of the army, endeavoured to render it more complete, and during the retreat towards Resov, Nový Sandec, and Moravská Ostrava, purposely created a panic in the ranks. Taking advantage of the confusion, they fled as far as Olomouc (in Moravia) and many even reached Prague. The disorder was so great that even the heads of the army failed to observe which regiments were annihilated, captured, or fugitive. Prague rejoiced at the part taken by the Czech soldiers in the Russian victory.

To complete this sketch it is necessary to recite the tragic tale of the surrender of the 28th Czech Regiment of Prague, which caused such a stir a year ago, and which illustrates best of all the true spirit of the Czech nation.

This regiment had surrendered to the Russians in the Carpathians on April 3rd, 1915, with all their arms and baggage, not even excepting their military band. In this way nearly 2000 men went over to the Russians and the greater part of the regiment commenced immediately to fight the Austrians. After that they were transported to Kieff, where they were received with enthusiasm. The Emperor, in the Order of the Day read to all

the soldiers, dishonoured for ever this regiment, ordered it to be dissolved, and its colours placed in the military museum in Vienna.

Connected with this incident there is a very painful story for the Czechs, which was enacted on the Italian front, and which has since been mentioned in the Italian Press. The news of the dissolution of the 28th Regiment had everywhere made a great stir abroad and had given the lie to all the Austrian gossips, who were pretending that everything was going well with the Empire. It had also provoked sentiments of revolt among the Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia. The military authorities of Vienna, therefore, determined to correct this impression and to revenge themselves on the Czechs in the most brutal manner. Last autumn they formed a new battalion, the 28th Regiment, composed exclusively of young men of twenty; they were sent to the Isonzo front and without pity or regard, and without the slightest scruple were exposed to the most murderous Italian artillery fire near Gorizia. Only eighteen soldiers survived the massacre, the rest of the thousand young men remained on the battlefield. Immediately afterwards, the Emperor caused a new Order of the Day to be read to the army, proclaiming that the disgrace of the 28th Regiment of Prague was atoned for by the sacrifice of this regiment on the Isonzo.

The few soldiers who survived this crime related that it was an absolute carnage to which they were sent, as they were put in a place where they were inevitably massacred, and the incident has been used since to incite them. Prague was not duped, she well understood the odiousness of this detestable attempt on the part of the Viennese government to revenge itself, and then to make the fact serve its own interests.

Bad treatment of the Czech soldiers by German officers constantly led to disturbances, local mutinies, refusals to obey, which ended frequently in sanguinary brawls; and a number of plots were detected among the Czech soldiers to surrender *en masse*.

Towards the month of May 1915, after ten months of continuous effort, the Czechs had succeeded in completely disorganising the army. But at this period the Germans of the Empire took over the management of the Austro-Hungarian armies, disbanded the Czech regiments, and dispersed the Czech soldiers among German and Magyar regiments. Mass surrenders now became almost impossible. Yet in spite of all they continued their practices on the Isonzo front and notably in Transylvania, as was shown by the debates in the Hungarian Chamber on the 5th September 1916, and by the fury of the Magyars.

In all these cases the spirit which the Czech

propaganda had created in the Austrian army persisted, in spite of the terrorism by which the Prussians had succeeded in re-establishing military discipline. It was thus that during the retreat of the Russians in Galicia last summer, the anti-Austrian attitude of certain Czech regiments hindered the manoeuvres of the Austrian Generals, and led to their defeat by the Russians close to Tomaszov. The military circles at Vienna then threatened the Czech deputies to make Bohemia pay dearly after the war for the treachery of her soldiers.

The results of the behaviour of the Czech soldiers have been disastrous to Austria. Nearly 350,000 Czecho-Slovak soldiers have surrendered to the Serbs and Russians. In fact, at the beginning of 1916, the Austrian army counted only about 600,000 Czecho-Slovaks, who were all sent to the front. Of the 70,000 Austrian prisoners in Serbia, 35,000 were Czechs; in Russia there are more than 300,000 Czech prisoners, and among these many have entered the ranks of the Serbian and Russian army. Up to the Revolution only administrative difficulties and lack of good-will of the old government have prevented all Czech prisoners from being enrolled in the Russian army. But in spite of that, an important Czech Legion, forming a large distinct unit, fought in the Russian ranks, and the Russian communica-

tions of February 2nd, 1916, and March 29th, 1917, highly praised the services rendered to the Allies by these gallant soldiers.

They all fought heroically, and more than a third are decorated to-day. In the fighting on the Dobrudja in the month of October 1916, many thousands of Czech soldiers took part, and as General Zivkovic says, in the Order of the Day, "they fought heroically."

In France a Czecho-Slovak legion was formed too. On the day of the declaration of war, 471 Czech residents in France voluntarily joined the army. At the end of October 1914 they were already in the trenches in Champagne and in other sections of the front. In May 1916 they took part in the offensive near Neuville St Vaast, and their losses were very heavy; they took part later in the fighting near Souchez in the month of June, and in the Battle of Champagne, and finally in the Battle of the Somme. The greater number of them were mentioned in the Order of the Day and decorated with the Military Cross. The Czar, being informed of their gallant conduct, also conferred decorations on them. A certain number of them have now been sent to Salonika. Their losses to-day, in killed, wounded, and disabled, amount to more than fifty per cent.

In conclusion we must mention the Czech soldiers in the Serbian army, those who have

now voluntarily enlisted in Canada and in England, and others at present prisoners in Italy, who also asked to enroll in the armies of the Allies to fight against their hereditary enemies.

This attitude of the Czech soldiers in Italy is very significant, seeing that lately the Austrian government has done all it possibly could to incense the Austrian Slavs against Italy and the Allies. Indeed, this unhappy Czech nation, whose situation during these two years of war can only be compared to that of martyred Belgium and blood-deluged Serbia, by contributing to the victory of the Allies, may be said to have almost achieved the impossible.

(b) TERRORISM IN THE CZECH COUNTRIES

We have seen that the Czechs have had a hand in the military disasters of Austria and that they continue to menace the Central Empires. The conduct of the Czecho-Slovak soldiers was the cause of terrible persecutions of the whole nation. During the whole time the war has raged, the Czecho-Slovaks have worked continuously, silent and martyred, but never faltering in their task. Isolated and dumb, they struggle for the triumph of the Entente without the consolation of encouragement. They know not the glory of sacrifice, only its bitterness.

It would be difficult to find in history a situation as tragic as that of the Czech people. Forced by their tyrants' bayonets into combat against their racial brothers, their youth is condemned to perish ingloriously on the battlefields for a cause they detest. The prisons are full of political prisoners: executions are frequent. Only a few representatives of the nation succeeded in escaping abroad to inform Europe of the aspirations, sympathies, and efforts of their people, the natural allies of the Entente, and to prevent, if possible, the escape of the Habsburgs from their just punishment.

Led by Professor Masaryk, deputy to the Viennese Parliament, at present lecturer at King's College, London, they organised the Czecho-Slovak movement in the Allied countries, and are assiduously working for the liberation of their country.

The Belgians, the Poles, and the Serbs have at least the consolation that part of their nation is still free and able to defend their country by word and deed. The Czecho-Slovak countries have the misfortune to have been from the first day of the war in the hands of their enemies, terrorised by threats of imprisonments and executions, and completely isolated from the rest of the world. It is difficult to imagine a situation more disheartening, more unfavourable to resistance. The following facts will demonstrate better than

long articles the desperate situation of the Czecho-Slovaks.

Since the day of mobilisation all political life has been suspended. The three parties of the Opposition—the Radical, the National-Socialist, and the Progressive Parties—were dissolved, their journals suppressed, their leaders, who at the same time were the national leaders, were either imprisoned or exiled; some Czech deputies were even sentenced to death, as for instance the leader of the Young Czech Party, Dr Kramář, Dr Rašín, Prof. Masaryk, and others.

The condemnations to death pronounced on civilians in Austria since the beginning of the war already exceed the huge figure of 4000, over one thousand of which are Czechs. A great number of the condemned are women. Also thousands of soldiers have been executed for treason.

In order to intimidate its adversaries, the government adopts most arbitrary and iniquitous measures against all Czech patriots who are working for the Czech cause abroad. Raids are made on their homes; their families, relatives, and friends are persecuted. A certain number of politicians condemned to death are kept in prison, destined to be executed immediately a popular rising occurs. All that reminded people of the ancient independence of the Crown of St Venceslas and of the Slav solidarity of the

Czech nation has been as far as possible swept away.

Almost all literary works which referred to Slav questions, and the majority of which have been sold for years past, have been confiscated. The following authors are on the index: Havlíček, Sv. Čech, Machar, Jirásek, Holeček, Tolstoy, Miliukoff, etc. Also portraits of the heroes of Czech history (Hus, Havlíček, Rieger, Žižka, etc.) are prohibited. Reprints of photographs of the Crown of St Venceslas and many national and folk songs were found seditious, as well as commercial articles, marks and labels printed in white, blue, and red, inscriptions in Slav languages, advertisements of grammars of French and Russian, etc. The "Czecho-Slav Commercial Academy" had to change its name into "Commercial Academy"; decorative plates representing the Bohemian Lion Rampant were removed from the bridges of Prague. Names of streets and public places reminiscent of other Slav countries were changed. Articles in school-books referring to Bohemian history were confiscated. The enumeration of similar chicaneries would necessitate the writing of whole books.

The government confiscated not only the property of political delinquents and of Czechs who had fled from Austria, but also the property of Czech soldiers who have been taken prisoners

in Russia and Serbia. Thus the State derives a double benefit: it acquires property, and at the same time satisfies the vengeance of the Austro-Germans on the soldiers' wives and children, who are thus deprived of the means to live, and are doomed to perish of starvation.

In several cases the government tried to intimidate public opinion through infamous trials. The following are some of the most important ones.

The trial of Klofáč, leader of the National Socialist Party.—Klofáč was arrested in September 1914 on a charge of high treason. He was reprovved for his travels to Serbia and Russia, and his relations with Slav politicians. Documents produced by *agents provocateurs* presented Klofáč as a secret member of the Serbian "Narodna Obrana" Society, which, with Serbian aid, had stirred up revolt in Bohemia during the mobilisation. The trial was suspended owing to a lack of proofs, but Klofáč was left in prison.

The trial of the National Socialist Deputies, Choc, Vojna, Buřival, and Netolický.—This trial, in which the accused were condemned on July 30th, 1916, for failing to denounce the revolutionary propaganda of Prof. Masaryk, is a judicial scandal. No serious proof was produced. The only documents were some notes by Prof. Masaryk, found by the police amongst his

books, and referring to a conference held before the war.

The trial of Scheiner, President of the Slav Union of "Sokol" Gymnasts.—He was arrested the same day as Dr Kramář and charged with having organised revolts of the "Sokols" on the battlefields, and with having kept up relations with the enemies of the monarchy. Dr Scheiner was released later on, as the accusation was based on no positive facts.

The trial of Kramář, Rašín, Červinka, and Zamazal.—Deputy Kramář was arrested on May 27th, 1915; the other three accused were arrested at the end of June. They were charged with high treason and with the corruption of the army. The responsibility for the revolts of Czech soldiers at the front was laid on the leader of the Neoslav movement. The sentence to death was based on the evidence of former correspondence he had had with French and Russian statesmen, on his speeches and articles before the war, on his travels to Russia, etc. (see the document in the Appendix). Deputy Rašín was condemned as being the principal collaborator of Dr Kramář. Červinka, the editor of *Národní Listy*, and the accountant Zamazal were condemned for espionage. The death sentence against all four was pronounced on June 3rd, 1916. Their appeal was dismissed. The new Emperor pardoned the condemned,

commuting the sentence on Kramář to fifteen, on Rašín to ten, and on Červinka and Zamazal each to six years' hard labour.

The trial of Prof. Masaryk and his daughter, Dr Alice Masaryk.—Immediately after the publication of the manifesto of the Czecho-Slovak National Council for Foreign Affairs, on November 15th, 1915, the Austrian Justice opened a judicial inquiry against the exiled deputy, who abroad became the leader of the movement for the independence of Bohemia. Unable to reach Prof. Masaryk, the military authorities imprisoned his daughter, who was not released till after an energetic Press campaign in the Allied countries and especially in America. The *Reichspost* of Vienna announced on December 6th, 1916, that Prof. Masaryk was sentenced to death *in contumacia*.

The trial of the Socialist leader, Dr Soukup, and his nine friends will be more complicated and more important than the other trials. The prosecution is trying to construct a vast conspiracy against Austria-Hungary, in which the following persons are implicated: Court Councillor M. Olič, formerly President of the Police of Prague; two editors of Masaryk's newspaper *Čas*, Messrs Dušek and Hájek; also Madame Beneš, wife of the author of this book, at present in Paris, charged with complicity with her husband; Madame Linhart, wife of a workman at present in Switzerland, and

mother of three little children; a workman in Prague; two students, and the sister of the editor of *L'Indépendance Tchecoslovaque*, Mlle Sychrava Prague. The trial commenced on November 13th, 1916, but was again adjourned pending further investigations. The police know that the Czecho-Slovak National Council is in touch with Bohemia, from where it obviously receives information. The tribunal, however, felt the flimsiness of the "proofs." The relations of Bohemia with the Council have been neither discovered nor disproved.

Among other trials we may mention that of the municipal councillor of Prague, M. Matějovský, and of fifteen municipal clerks, charged with circulating the Russian proclamation to the Czechs, and with secretly publishing a journal. All the accused were sentenced, in February 1915, to many years' imprisonment.

At the beginning of May 1915 six persons, among whom were two girls, were condemned to death in Kyjov, Moravia, for having circulated the manifesto of Grand Duke Nicholas. On the same charge sixty-nine persons from Brno were brought before the court-martial of Vienna, and fifteen of them were sentenced to death. The Governor executed some of them merely to spread terror among the population.

To sum up, there is nothing more eloquent than

the following facts, which show the political situation in Bohemia during the war :—

KLOFÁČ, deputy, and leader of the *Nationalist* Party, in prison since the commencement of the war ; four of his colleagues, all deputies to the Reichsrath, and important members of the party, condemned for high treason.

KRAMAŘ, deputy, and leader of the *Liberal* (Young Czech) Party, with his colleague, Deputy Rašín, condemned to death, and subsequently pardoned.

MASARYK, deputy, and leader of the *Progressive* Party, and the real intellectual leader of the whole nation, exiled, condemned to death.

SOUKUP, deputy and leader of the *Social Democratic* Party, charged with high treason.

SCHEINER, leader of the "Sokols" and unquestionably one of the chief leaders of the nation, imprisoned, then released and put under police supervision.

To this must be added the shooting of soldiers *en masse*, and hundreds of political trials. All this needs no comment.

Financial circles in Bohemia also caused annoyance to the government on account of their reserved and hostile attitude towards war loans. The results of subscriptions in Bohemia were pitiful. Certain banking institutes in Prague were even suspected of keeping in touch with Russia

and with Czech organisations in America, which conducted anti-Austrian propaganda. Police raids were ordered on the Živnostenská Banka (Trade Bank) and the "Bohemia" Bank, presided over by Dr Scheiner. The manager of the Živnostenská Banka, *Mr Preiss*, was imprisoned, with his four colleagues, being suspected of relations with Dr Kramář.

Fully three-quarters of the Czech journals and all Slovak journals in Hungary have been stopped. Those which are still being published in Bohemia and Moravia are filled with news supplied by the Official Press Bureau, which they are forced by the police to publish.

The newspapers of the Radical parties (the party for the independence of Bohemia, the National Socialist and the Progressive parties) were entirely suppressed during the first months of the war. The majority of the editors are in prison.

Samostatnost (Independence), the journal of the Independence Party, was the first to be suspended. The editors were either imprisoned or sent to the front.

České Slovo (Czech Word), the journal of the National Socialist Party, was suppressed next. The editors began to publish a new journal entitled *Naše Slovo* (Our Word), which was also soon suppressed. The majority of the editors are in prison (Deputies Klofáč, Choc, Špatný, Skorkovský, and others).

Čas (The Times), the journal of the Progressive Party of Prof. Masaryk, was suppressed in the summer of 1915. The editors, Dušek and Hájek, are accused of high treason. All other journals of this party have been suppressed as well.

Národní Listy (National News), the journal of the Young Czechs, has been twice temporarily suspended. Its editors, Rašín and Červinka, as well as its proprietor, Dr Kramář, were condemned to death.

Lidové Noviny (Popular News), the journal of the Democratic Party of Moravia (owned by Dr Stranský), was also temporarily suspended, as well as—

Moravská Orlice (The Moravian Eagle), the journal of M. Žáček, formerly minister without portfolio (Old Czech Conservative).

Even the Catholic Press was not spared. Several of the clerical newspapers were stopped—*Mladý Křesťan* (Young Christian), *Český Západ* (The West of Bohemia), and others.

The Press of the Social Democratic Party, which is greatly developed, especially in provincial towns of Bohemia, was suppressed almost entirely; exception was made with *Právo Lidu* (Rights of the People) of Prague, and *Rovnost* (Equality) of Brno.

Several large provincial towns like Pardubice and Pisek, which had five or six journals each before the war, are at present entirely deprived of their local Press.

According to statistics published by the *Wiener Zeitung* in 1916, seventy-eight Czech journals have been stopped during the months of April, May, and June alone.

Those newspapers which have been spared have to comply with the instructions received from Vienna. They are prohibited from commenting in any way on the official communications, or from quoting comments of neutral or enemy journals. They are not allowed to announce the Russian successes in capital letters. In December 1914 the President of the Police of Prague informed the chief editors of all Czech daily newspapers of the desire of the government that the Czech Press should show more patriotic sentiments, as the dry tone of the articles could probably be interpreted as a sign of sympathy with the enemy. They were further informed that the Official Press Bureau was prepared to supply them with patriotic articles ready to be published as though written by the editor. This proposal was rejected with indignation: the journals agreed to publish articles from the Press Bureau without comments, only if marked as such.

Slovakia fell a victim to the same treatment as Bohemia and Moravia. All Slovak politicians were reduced to impotence by the Magyars; some were imprisoned, others sent to the front. Those who escaped from both alternatives were put

under strict police supervision. The country was depopulated—hundreds of people were shot when the Russians arrived in the Carpathians, and all Slovak papers and publications were suppressed. To-day the country is absolutely silenced, and Tizsa's Magyar Government is triumphant.

Finally, the Austrian Government, completely in the hands of the Prussians, have decided to proceed with measures of Germanisation. The rights relative to the usage of the Czech language in the administration, before the courts of law, or on the railways—rights which for two generations had been the cause of severe political struggles—were abolished by a single stroke of the pen. The railways were entrusted to the Prussian military; the Czech language was suppressed in administrative and other Civil Service offices, where it was formerly lawfully employed; the Czechs were deprived of their appointments as magistrates and other positions of authority. In this way is attempted the complete Germanisation and absorption of the Czechs and Austrian Slavs by the Prussians.

Such is approximately the state of affairs in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. The people, deprived of their most elementary rights and victuals, impoverished by a devastating war, martyred by brutal and cruel persecutions on the part of the police, military, and government,

deprived of their leaders, their newspapers, books, and national songs, are given over to an ever-increasing and shameless Germanisation. Disorganised, abused, completely at the mercy of their tyrants, far from their natural Allies, and demoralised by false information, the people find themselves in a desperate situation.

But in spite of everything they have never lost confidence in the victory of the Allies, never doubted their ultimate deliverance from the Austro-Magyar yoke.

VII

THE NATIONAL SPIRIT OF THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS

THUS we had three inveterate enemies who continually opposed the accomplishment of the task so enthusiastically undertaken by us.

By our energy and sheer force of will we succeeded in contributing our share to the progress of civilisation. In the Middle Ages our literature was highly developed, and our country gave birth to such men as Hus, Chelčický, and Comenius. We have given the world an example of a people who placed liberty of conscience and a lofty idealism above all else ; we were the pioneers of the modern philosophy of individualism, and, thanks to the devotion of a small handful of courageous men, we have succeeded in regenerating our country, in bringing it back to new life, after a martyrdom unparalleled in history.

Our national "awakeners," inspired by our ancient moral and religious ideals, now spread them broadcast. Dobrovský, Kollár, Šafařík, Palacký, are the men who rendered unforgettable services to the Slav world. Dobrovský and Šafařík are famous for their linguistic and archæo-

logical studies; Kollár was first to conceive the idea of Slav solidarity; Palacký is one of the most remarkable historians of Europe, and the importance of his work far surpasses the narrow boundaries of the history of a small Slav nation.

We have succeeded by assiduous labour in building our Czech house : though hindered continuously by the dynasty and the Germans, we have succeeded in making our country one of the richest territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, inasmuch as we practically feed and provide for all the other provinces. We have a right to be proud of our writers, men of letters and scientists of great reputation, worthy to be compared with those of any other civilised country. We have established a perfect system of primary and secondary instruction, and we have built up a flourishing University. We have in Bohemia succeeded in what no other nation except one has succeeded in, namely, in having practically no illiterates. Unfortunately our writers, such as Mácha, Němcová, Neruda, Vrchlický, Machar, Šova, Březina, whose works are in no wise inferior to those of the best-known foreign contemporary authors, are hardly known outside their own country, because they belong to only a small Slav nation, and because the hour of the Slavs has not yet struck.

We have our national painters, sculptors, musicians, and our Slovak peasant art and industries. Their work compares favourably with that of more developed nations.

And we have succeeded in accomplishing all this by our own endeavours, for the Austrian Government has ever taken every means to strangle our development. After paying Vienna vast sums in rates and taxes, we were able by making great sacrifices to save such little sums as were required to keep up our education, to assist our artists and architects, and to aid our writers and societies with private subscriptions.

Moreover, we have remained faithful to our traditions of a lofty idealism. We have no such philosophers as Nietzsche; no historians like Mommsen and Treitschke, nor politicians like Bismarck; but the humanitarian and idealist thought of Hus, Chelčický, the Moravian Brothers, Dobrovský, Kollar, Palacký, is to be found in the work of the writers already mentioned, Mácha, Vrchlický, Čech, Machar, and Březina, and in the minds of men like the publicist Havlíček, the statesman Rieger, and the politician and philosopher Masaryk. We might have followed the German method of violence, and, by calling to our rescue the millions of Eastern Slavs, have thrown off our yoke. But we have always refused to follow this policy. It is in this humanitarian and

idealist character, reflected in our history, and represented in each of our great men, that we most resemble our brother Slavs, the Russians. If we remain profoundly Czech, we are also profoundly Slavs.

It would be possible also to deduce this national characteristic of the Czecho-Slovaks from their relations with France. The efforts of John Hus, Chelčický, the Moravian Brethren, and Comenius for freedom of conscience had a direct bearing on the individualistic philosophic movement in France which led to the French Revolution, and which created the France of to-day.

The Czech nation, down-trodden, and almost annihilated by centuries of persecution, found in the French Revolution the philosophy which brought them new life, and enabled them to resist the Teutonic pressure. This national revival in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the work of writers and publicists, the majority of whom were nourished by the idealist doctrines of the French philosophers. The Czech spirit, profoundly idealist and humanitarian, could not but find something akin to itself in French philosophy, full of noble ideals as it is.

It is also well known that in 1848 Palacký, when starting the struggle against the Germans, Austria, and the Magyars, took for his own the great motto of the French Revolution, "Liberty, Equality,

Fraternity," basing on it all his efforts for the liberation of his country.

Later on, in 1869, Rieger addressed a manifesto to France, in which he referred to the sympathy existing between the two nations, and showed, too, that it was to the interest of French policy to aid the Czechs in their struggle against their common foe, the Germans.

In conclusion, we may recall the protest of the Czech nation in 1870. Aroused to indignation against the Prussian aggressors, and following with immense concern the trend of military events, they vehemently protested, through the medium of the Bohemian Diet, against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. The following passage may be quoted from this memorable document :—

“ The Czech nation cannot but express its most ardent sympathy with noble and glorious France, which to-day is defending its independence and national soil, which has accomplished so much for the advancement of civilisation and the principles of humanity and liberty.

“ The Czech nation is convinced that such a humiliation as the tearing of a strip of territory from a nation so illustrious and heroic, so full of just national pride, would become a source of unending wars, and therefore of unending injuries to humanity and civilisation.

“ The Czechs are a small people, but their spirit

and their courage are not small. They would be ashamed by their silence to let the world believe that they approve of this injustice, or that they dare not make their protest against it because of its underlying power.

“ Their name must go down to history untarnished. They must and will remain faithful to the spirit of their ancestors, who were the first in Europe to proclaim the principle of freedom of conscience, and who in the face of an enemy superior in numbers, have fought to the point of exhaustion.”

Such is the true Czech spirit and tradition, unchanging and undying. The national spirit of the Czecho-Slovaks is as free and as democratic as that of the British nation, which has succeeded after many constitutional struggles in gaining self-government and individual freedom.

VIII

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PAST AND THE HOPES FOR THE FUTURE. REORGANISATION OF CENTRAL EUROPE AND INDEPENDENT BOHEMIA.

REFLECTING on the history of the Czech people, we clearly see how tragic has been their situation, how immense the burden that has always weighed upon them.

For twelve centuries they have fought a hopeless fight against an enemy many times their superior in strength.

The religious Reformation originated with them ; they accomplished and survived this great moral crisis.

They rebelled against the dynasty which oppressed them, but were defeated, and underwent a terrible punishment. Their leaders died on the scaffold, and the nation itself was condemned for several centuries to a slow but systematic extermination. For years it appeared moribund or dead. Then a handful of men who lived only for the cause of their country—awaken it. . . . And when it awakens, it again finds itself

greatly changed. It suffers a new moral and religious crisis, and becomes once again Catholic.

In 1848, launched into political life, they find themselves in a tragic position. They must resign themselves to defend the existence of a State which had ever oppressed them, to fight for an absolutist dynasty which had deprived them of moral and material wealth, to defend their enemies, and, as it were, assist at their own funeral.

The last thirty years have been spent in active and successful preparation for an intellectual, moral, and material emancipation.

The position of the Czech people is specially tragic during the present war, when they had to join the army of their enemies, who made them their cannon-fodder. They were destined to be sacrificed for the benefit of their oppressors, the cynical adorers of Prussian and Magyar violence; their best forces were to be employed for the realisation of the Pan-German Central Europe, the achievement of which failed in 1848, and which, almost realised to-day, constitutes for the Czecho-Slovaks a danger of intolerable sufferings.

It is in order to escape the sufferings of the past which again threaten them, to assure their peaceful progress in the future, to enable them to range themselves as an advanced and highly civilised nation on the side of the Allies, that the Czecho-Slovaks to-day make their appeal and ask for

complete independence from Vienna, Budapest, and Berlin. Placing all their hopes on the Allies, they set forth their political programme for the future and their ideas on the present international political situation somewhat as follows:—

In Central Europe there are two autocratic States which are a continuous danger to the peace of the world; Germany and Austria-Hungary. These two States have joined, in order to obtain for Germany hegemony in Europe, and to preserve for the Austrians and Magyars the domination of the Slav and Latin nations of Austria-Hungary and the Balkans. Austria-Hungary is indispensable to the German plan of domination; it is therefore necessary to abolish the focus of disorders, which is Austria-Hungary: the Austro-Hungarian problem is the clue to the situation. The war of 1914 had no other aim in view.

It is in the interest of all the Allied nations to comprehend the significance of this war and to act accordingly, as everything would be attained through the realisation of their legitimate claim, their rights, and their vital needs for their national existence.

It is unnecessary to repeat what has been said about the Pan-German plot, and how in consequence of these Prussian designs the great Western Powers are deeply interested in the fate of Bohemia. Bismarck once said that "the master of Bohemia will be the master of Europe." It is still more

true to-day. If the Prussians should succeed in maintaining the existence of Austria-Hungary, and, by thus strangling Bohemia, could realise their great plan of a line from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf, they would become masters of Central Europe, masters of the Mediterranean; they would have the whole of Turkey under their control, and could menace Egypt. The great Oriental Railway runs from Constantinople to Baghdad and Cairo. Suez and Egypt, as well as India, and the security of the English route to India, would be compromised. It is mainly England and the vital roadway to her world-empire that the Pan-German design menaces.

France equally would be crushed, deprived of her richest provinces, pushed aside, and her national existence threatened.

As regards Italy, her fate would be no happier: Germany would exercise her hegemony in the Adriatic, as she wishes to possess the whole Eastern Adriatic shore and even Greece; the irredentist territory could never be restored to Italy; the great future which is awaiting Italy in the New Europe would never be realised. Serbia could never think of a union with the rest of her race; and, above all, all the oppressed nationalities of Central Europe in Austria-Hungary and in the Balkans, would continue to suffer under the yoke of Berlin, Vienna, and Budapest.

To check these German and Magyar plans, the Czechs demand that a barrier against the German expansion towards the East be created in the shape of an independent Bohemia. This barrier would be strengthened by the free and united Yugo-Slavs and Italians, who, by cutting off the Germans from the Adriatic, would regain the possession of their natural rights. Finally, in the North the Poles would offer a ready hand to the Czechs and help them in barring the Germans from the road to the East.

This solution of the Central European problem evidently requires a reconstruction of the territories up to now held by Austria-Hungary. The principle of this reorganisation has been agreed upon *ipso facto* by the intervention of Italy and Rumania. To-day the necessity of a dismemberment of Austria-Hungary is generally recognised in all the Allied countries, and has been officially acknowledged in the Allies' Note to President Wilson of January 10th, 1917.

Thus a stable equilibrium in Central Europe would be constituted. Great Britain would be definitely secure against all German attacks, France would recover the province of Alsace-Lorraine, and would have devoted allies and sworn enemies of Teutonic hegemony east of Germany. Italy would find in the Central European States a vast field for economic expansion. Her desire

for economic emancipation from Germany will find an echo among the Slavs, who have the same desire, and who will facilitate her task of eliminating German industrial competition.

A united and independent Poland, free Russia, and a democratic, independent, Czecho-Slovak State will form an impassable barrier against Germany. In the South, Greater Serbia, composed of Serb, Croatian, and Slovene territories, and forming an independent Jugo-Slav State, will complete the encirclement of Germany.

Transylvania will be reattached to Rumania, and independent Hungary would only keep for herself the territories inhabited exclusively by the Magyars.

Thus the principle of nationality will have full expression, consistent with the strategic and political necessities involved.

This solution of the Austro-Hungarian problem will once and for all make impracticable the imperialistic Pan-German plans of Berlin, and will definitely bar the road to the *Drang nach Osten* of the Germans—the German push towards the East.

The free Slavs, in association and communication from the Baltic to the Adriatic, continually threatened by the Germans, will have every inducement to support each other. France and Italy, equally threatened by the Germans, will

necessarily become their natural allies. Austria, broken up, will never again be able to furnish Germany, the formidable enemy of Great Britain, with 5,000,000 men as cannon-fodder. The Magyars, separated from Austria and Germany, and deprived of the possibility of oppressing the Slav and Rumanian nationalities, will no longer pursue their policy of aiding Vienna and Berlin.

Above all, Germany, finding herself thus weakened and reduced to her proper strength, and having strong Slav nations for neighbours in the East, will be unable to recommence her projects of to-day.

But it is in Bohemia that the Allies will find the basis of their resistance against the Germans. In fact, Bohemia will constitute the very heart of the anti-German barrier. Independent Bohemia would be inhabited by some twelve millions of people filled with a determination to withstand encroachment on their liberties; for twelve centuries of struggle against the Germans prove that the spirit of the Czecho-Slovaks is indestructible. Their energy is great enough to represent a real political force, and their conduct during the present war reveals that they are ready to sacrifice all, when their existence and the rights of humanity are at stake.

An independent Czecho-Slovak State would be

strong enough politically to stand alone and its vitality would be unquestionable. As to its economic strength the following figures will no doubt be of interest to the English public.

The Czech countries (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia) are superior to all other Austrian provinces in their wealth, and almost alone they assure the prosperity of the Empire.

They are more densely populated than the rest of Austria (128 people to one square kilometre as against 83 in the rest of Austria). Of the $6\frac{1}{2}$ million hectares devoted to the cultivation of grain in Austria, Bohemia had in 1914 2,610,490 hectares (over 6 million acres), *i.e.* 38 per cent. Austria produces about $7\frac{1}{2}$ million metric tons of grain annually, of which 3.9 millions, *i.e.* 51 per cent., are produced in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia alone, so that the Czech countries yield $15\frac{1}{2}$ qr. per hectare, but the rest of Austria only 9.1 qr. per hectare.

Of the $7\frac{1}{2}$ million metric tons of grain, Austria produces over 5 million metric tons of rye, wheat, and barley, Bohemia $2\frac{3}{4}$ million, *i.e.* 54 per cent.

Thus the Czech countries produce 376 kg. (=829 lb.) of grain per inhabitant, the rest of Austria only 193 kg. (*i.e.* 428 lb.). The Czech countries yield 268 kg. (*i.e.* 590 lb.) of rye, wheat, and barley per inhabitant, the rest of Austria 126 kg. (*i.e.* 277 lb.).

The superiority of the Czech countries in grain

production over the rest of Austria is therefore obvious. The same applies to the potato crops : the Czech countries yield 43 per cent. of the total Austrian production. The cultivation of fruit in Bohemia far surpasses that in Austria, and the Czech countries contribute 95 per cent. to the total beetroot production of Austria. The whole of Hungary does not yield one-third of Bohemia's sugar production.

But the main source of the wealth of the Czech countries is commerce and industries, in which more than half of the population is employed.

The importance of Czech industries and commerce may be gauged from the relatively high contribution of the Czech countries in rates and taxes levied on industrial profits. In 1914 the Czech countries paid in taxes 44 million kronen, *i.e.* 62.9 per cent., the other provinces 26 millions, *i.e.* 37.1 per cent. The contribution per inhabitant is 4.34 kronen in the Czech countries, 1.75 kronen in the other provinces.

In 1912 15 million metric tons of brown coal, *i.e.* 83 per cent. of the total quantity mined in Austria, were obtained from the Czech countries. They also produce good charcoal and lignite. The production of black coal in the Czech countries is equal to that of the richest countries in coal. In Hungary, all coal is found exclusively in Slovakia, and Slovakia is also rich in iron-ore.

As regards iron, 60 per cent. of the total production comes from the Czech countries. The centre of the iron industry is situated in the Czech countries (Pilsen (the Skoda Factory), Vitkovice, Rokycany, Beroun, Kladno.)

Almost all the sugar factories of the monarchy are in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. Bohemia alone produces $10\frac{1}{2}$ million hectolitres of beer annually, which is more than 50 per cent. of the total production of Austria. The beer exported from Austria is manufactured exclusively in Bohemia (Pilsen beer), and its export amounts to 15 million kronen per annum. As to malt, which is produced exclusively by Bohemia, almost 55 million kronen worth is exported annually.

The textile industries flourish mostly in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. The export of textile goods from Bohemia amounts to 130 million kronen. The same applies to leather, chemicals, paper, electrotechnic, and wood industries.

The foreign trade also shows the extreme importance of the Czech countries.

Almost two-thirds of the Austrian exports, which in 1912 amounted to 2192 million kronen, come from the Czech countries. Over 220 million kronen worth of products, especially of sugar, was exported to England alone. Beer, malt, and hops were exported to France, textiles and machines to Italy, and sundry manufactured products to

Russia, Switzerland, and Rumania. Almost all these articles were made or grown in Bohemia.

On the other hand, Germany exploits Austria-Hungary, and takes without remorse articles necessary for her economic development: for instance, from the Czech countries great quantities of coal, wood manufactures, and agricultural products like eggs, butter, cheese, grains, etc., are exported to Germany.

Germany supplied France, England, Italy, and Russia with goods imported from Bohemia, which could easily be delivered without German intervention, if the direct trade routes between Bohemia and the Allied countries were not systematically blocked by Germany.

The Czechs are also the principal clients of the Austrian import trade. With the exception of the Viennese, the buyers of Paris goods are the Czechs, and articles of the latest fashion are always to be found in the shops of Prague. Two-thirds of the exports from France to Austria, as well as wine and fruits from Italy, are destined for Bohemia. Economically, therefore, the Czech countries are of considerable importance and by no means to be neglected.

But the Czecho-Slovaks call the attention of the Allied Powers to these facts for other reasons. Germany wants to bring the whole of Central Europe under her political and economic hege-

mony. The Czecho-Slovaks could render Europe an immense service by facilitating the trade war on Germany, for they would complete the encirclement of Germany from the east, Bohemia being situated on the line Berlin-Vienna-Budapest-Constantinople. Bohemia could even in many respects take Germany's place in the markets of the Allied nations.

The creation of this barrier is necessary, for Germany has completely subdued Austria-Hungary from the economic point of view. Austrian export and import trade depends entirely on Germany, the Dual Monarchy receiving from Germany, for instance in 1910, 1154 million kronen worth of products, and supplying her with 1062 millions worth of raw materials. Germany has enslaved the other Central European territories, and would occupy all the markets in the Balkans. It is a recognised fact that since 1908 the Balkan States have successively abandoned trade with other States, and all this trade has then been captured by Germany. Germany triumphed everywhere, penetrating into Austria, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Rumania, to say nothing of Turkey.

The situation will be rather different after the war. First of all, Germany will be blocked in the East, and all the nations on her Eastern frontier will be interested in not allowing her to

recommence, if only economically, her expansion towards the East. For them it will be a question of life and death. On the other hand, they will have to turn to the Adriatic to enter into economic relations with Italy, as well as the other Allied States of to-day. This will be the case with Bohemia, Magyar Hungary, Rumania, and Yugo-Slavia. The Western Allies will, of course, greatly profit by this new situation, being called upon to replace Germany before the war from the economic point of view, and to collect the fruits, after the disappearance of Austria-Hungary, of the reorganisation of Central and South-Eastern Europe.

No part of this forecast is impossible if two conditions are fulfilled: the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, and the reconstruction of the independent Czecho-Slovak State. The Czech question is truly an international question. It is therefore imperative that all statesmen who are concerned with the political and economic interests of the Allied countries should be aware of these facts, as the Czecho-Slovaks will be unable to render the Allies any real service from the political and economic point of view, unless they are assured absolute political independence.

IX

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ENGLAND AND BOHEMIA IN THE PAST AND IN THE FUTURE

LOOKING at the map of Europe and seeing Bohemia separated from England by hundreds of miles, by large states like Saxony, Prussia, Holland, and Belgium, and finally by a sea, we might doubt whether there could possibly exist any common interests or close and important ties between the great insular nation and Bohemia, situated right in the heart of Central Europe. And yet, in spite of these natural and almost insurmountable obstacles, we may affirm that these two countries have not only very strong common interests, but that even in the past, relations have existed between them, and that it is a matter for no surprise that the Czecho-Slovaks regard England instinctively as their natural ally against an enemy which threatens them on all sides.

The nature of these relations is of a different kind from those between France and Bohemia.

For a long time Bohemia was little known in England, in proof of which is often given the famous passage from "A Midsummer Night's

Dream," in which Shakespeare placed Bohemia on a sea-shore! But the Czechs and Bohemia were spoken of in England as early as the end of the ninth century in the books of travels written by Othar and Wulfstan, who described the Scandinavian, Baltic, and Germanic countries, mentioning also the Slav Bohemians. Real relations, however, between the two countries commenced only later, in the first half of the twelfth century, under the Bohemian king, Přemysl Otakar I., when the sister of the Bohemian ruler was to marry the English king, Henry III. The negotiations, however, fell through, and it was not until 1382 that Anne, the daughter of the celebrated Bohemian king, Charles IV., was betrothed to Richard II., since when, regular mutual relations have been established. Passages relating to Bohemia and the Czechs in the Latin records of the contemporary English chroniclers testify to the fact that the country and people were by no means unknown in England. Moreover, it is asserted that many works of Chaucer were written under the auspices of Queen Anne of Bohemia, or dedicated to her.

It seems that the relations between England and Bohemia which had their origin in the marriage of the daughter of Charles IV. had an unexpected influence on the whole national history of Bohemia. From this dynastic tie arose the relations between the Universities of Prague and Oxford, in con-

sequence of which the great martyr of Bohemia, Jerome of Prague, a friend of John Hus, visited England. There he became acquainted with the works of John Wycliff, which he brought back with him to Bohemia, and put into the hands of John Hus, the famous originator of the Protestant movement in Bohemia, who thus obtained an opportunity of learning Wycliff's doctrine. These important events of the fifteenth century constituted a tie between Bohemia and England which no Czech patriot will ever forget; and if there were nothing in common between the country of Shakespeare and the country of Hus except these events, the few years of mutual influence could never be entirely ignored.

Thus the contact between the two countries acquired historical importance during the fifteenth century. Later on, when the Hussite movement assumed great political and religious importance, English writers and politicians devoted much attention to the movement in favour of religious reforms in the Czech countries. We find, for instance, the theologian and bishop, Reginald Peacock, attacking vehemently the Czech heretics in 1444; while the English statesman of the fifteenth century, Sir John Fortescue, was more moderate in his criticism. Other writers of these times (Alexander Barclay and Andrew Boorde) were very hostile to the Hussite movement. On

the other hand, the learned advocate of Protestantism in England, John Foxe (1516-1587), did all in his power to make the importance of John Hus better known in England, and it is through his "Acts and Monuments," published in 1563, that Bohemia became known in England as the "Country of John Hus."

For a long time no direct relations between the two countries were established, but during the stirring period of the religious revolt of the Bohemian Estates against Ferdinand II., when the Czechs rose in arms against the treacherous Habsburgs, and elected a new king in Frederick of the Palatinate, dynastic ties again drew Bohemia nearer to England, for Frederick married Elizabeth, the daughter of James I.

During the sad period in the history of Bohemia after the Battle of the White Mountain, many Czech Protestant exiles came to England, having been expelled by the Habsburgs. But this fact left few traces in the history of the relations of Bohemia with Great Britain.

Nevertheless, we may mention one of these isolated pilgrims, who was one of the most celebrated artists of his time, and who succeeded in making the Czech name famous in England. It was the engraver and painter Hollar (Venceslas Hollarus Bohemus), an artist of the first rank, who produced a quantity of engravings after

Holbein, Paolo Veronese, Titian, Teniers, Breughel, and others. Hollar came to England with the English Ambassador in Germany, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, who made his acquaintance in Germany, and with whom he often travelled. Hollar became Master of Designs to King Charles II. in 1640. Although resident in England for a long time, he never ceased to sign himself "Bohemus," always remaining attached to his native country. His engravings, portraits, and illustrations are very numerous, and were much thought of by the English critics.

There is yet another historical tie between England and Bohemia. Among the religious sects of England there is one of some importance, related to the Methodists, and called the Moravian Church. They devote themselves mostly to Christian missions, and are considered descendants of the famous Bohemian or Moravian Brethren, founded by Peter Chelčický. Thus again the Czech religious reform has influenced the religious life of England. One of the Bishops of the Moravian Brethren was the Czech pædagogue John Amos Comenius, who, like Hollar, was an exile. Samuel Hartlib, a merchant of London, took great interest in his educational and religious works. Desiring to reform English education, he invited Comenius to London. Comenius accepted the invitation and arrived in London in

100 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

the critical years of 1641. The Long Parliament readily voted money for the foundation of three colleges in which the principles of Comenius might at once be applied. However, the rapid succession of events which culminated in the Civil War, prevented Comenius from further developing his purposes in England, and he consequently left for the Continent. During his stay in England he gained many friends, and evidently his personality still further strengthened the intellectual and moral bonds between England and Bohemia.

As all political life in Bohemia had practically ceased to exist after the Battle of the White Mountain, we cannot trace any relations between the two countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was only at the beginning of the nineteenth century that relations were re-established: and this time it was England who exercised direct influence on the national life of the resuscitated Czech people. As a matter of fact, the Czech national "awakeners" sought everywhere sources of culture of which they could make use in order to stimulate the Czech national thought, to regenerate the literary Czech language, to enrich the Czech literature which was in its renaissance. As they drank deep from French literature, so also did they find sustenance in English literature. James Macpherson, with his celebrated translations of the Gaelic songs of Ossian,

seems to have served as an example to Venceslas Hanka, a Czech poet of some talent, who, with his forged versifications of the old Czech manuscripts of Králové Dvůr, added his quota to the literary revival. Jungman, one of the principal Czech writers at the beginning of the nineteenth century, translated Milton's "Paradise Lost," thus enriching his native tongue. K. H. Mácha, the first modern Czech poet, was a true child of Byron. We could quote many other examples showing how the great men of England of those times contributed to the Czech regeneration at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Later on these intellectual ties between the two countries became stronger. The development of Czech literature brought an appreciation of the great English writers, and English poets, novelists, essayists, philosophers, and statesmen are nowhere read with such approval and admiration as in Bohemia. During the years preceding the war, interest in English writings was most marked: novels as well as poetry, philosophical and historical works were translated, the political and constitutional history of England was studied, and the great economic strength of the British Empire and, in particular, the civilisation of Great Britain were generally admired. Libraries for the study of England were founded, as well as societies and clubs for the study of English and American literature

102 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

in order to enable the Czechs to enter into closer contact with the Anglo-Saxons.

On both sides there were many men (like Prof. Mourek, Count Lutzow, C. E. Maurice, Dr W. R. Morfill, H. W. Steed, Prof. Baker, Prof. Monroe, P. Selver, and others) who endeavoured to promote the intellectual relations between the two nations. In Bohemia young people were encouraged in the study of English by these men; in England they wrote the history of Bohemia, published translations from Czech literature and induced specialists to study the Czech Reforms of John Hus, the Moravian Brethren, and Comenius.

The great Czech composer, Antonin Dvořák, became celebrated first in England through his oratoria, and to-day enjoys a well-deserved reputation in that country. The Conservatorium of Music in Prague has had numerous pupils from Great Britain, while our young Protestant theologians come to England to prepare themselves for their work as Protestant pastors. Our municipalities, above all that of the city of Prague, and our "Sokol" Gymnastic Societies, succeeded in entering into close contact with England during the last few years before the war. Thanks to certain English writers the public began to take interest in the political situation of the Czechs, and also of the Slovaks in Hungary (on whom Dr Seton-Watson is an authority), and in the

peasant art of the Slovaks ; it was even possible to organise an exhibition of Czecho-Slovak art in the Doré Gallery in 1912.

Thus before the war the two countries were united by many bonds which would have increased as time went on. The outbreak of the war has for a moment interrupted these relations, but it has at the same time revealed to both nations the fact that in addition to mutual sympathies and intellectual relations, there are also common political and economic interests, binding the two countries together in a common struggle against a common enemy.

As we have explained above, Bohemia will constitute an important factor in the anti-German barrier which will be erected east of Germany to arrest the Prussian expansion to the East ; she will thus aid the Allies in arresting the economic penetration of Germany in the Balkans and in Central Europe.

There is yet another point of this question of great interest for the future relations of Bohemia with England : the economic relations between the two countries. After the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, and after the closing to Germany of her trade routes to the Near East, Bohemia will be economically closely attached to England. The following figures prove it abundantly.

The export trade of England to Austria-Hungary

in 1912 amounted to 237 and that of Austria-Hungary to England to 261 million kronen. The most important Austrian goods exported to England consisted of sugar. As we mentioned above, 93 per cent. of the Austrian sugar output is manufactured in the Czech countries. According to our statistics, two-thirds of the Austrian export and import trade are destined for the Czech countries, and sugar is exported exclusively from Bohemia. It was in reality the Czech countries, and not Vienna, or any other Austrian provinces, that were in economic relations with England.

This fact has not always been sufficiently realised, and the profit has been generally left to the Germans, who have always willingly played the part of intermediaries between the Czecho-Slovaks and the English in their commercial intercourse. If to this fact we add that the Austro-Hungarian export to the British Colonies amounted during 1909-1913 to an average annual total of 81,414,000 kronen, and the import to 261,866,000 kronen, the great importance of the economic Anglo-Czech relations will be acknowledged, as at least a half of this trade concerned exclusively the Czech countries. The importance of these figures will be more obvious when we remind ourselves that the imports of France from Austria-Hungary amounted only to 113,451,000 kronen and the

exports of the Habsburg Monarchy to France to 80,532,000 kronen annually. As to the French Colonies, the figures of their trade are, according to official statistics, much inferior to those of the British Colonies, the import to Austria-Hungary being 7,230,000 kronen and the export 5,004,000 kronen.

If the economic relations with France of the future Czecho-Slovak State already occupy the minds of commercial men in France, those concerned with British commerce obviously cannot remain indifferent to the future fate of Bohemia. Both from the political and the economic point of view, the English should not allow considerations of such importance to escape them.

During recent years quite a number of Czech economists, business men, manufacturers, and young lawyers at the outset of their career have come to England to make themselves familiar with English methods of industry, commerce, and high finance, thus at the same time strengthening the economic relations and becoming living ties between their native country and Great Britain.

We could multiply our arguments, accumulate figures, describe in greater detail the trade between England and the Czech countries in the past, and the prospects for the future. But the few examples cited are sufficient to give a general idea of the

106 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

political and economic interests common to the two countries, and to prevent our readers from falling into the error of under-estimating the international character of the Czech-Slovak question.

X

APPEAL TO THE POWERS OF THE ENTENTE

IN face of the war the Czechs never hesitated, not waiting, as some of the neutrals have done, to see its probable result. Their whole past history indicated which side they should take. It was, in fact, this war, the fatal end of the history of the Austro-Hungarians, this fight to the death against the Allied nations, that constituted for the Czechs the necessary, logical, and fateful hour of their history.

There could be no possible doubt. Two years previously the heart of every Czech beat high on hearing the announcement of the glorious victories of his brothers the Serbs, and the entire nation hastened with the greatest enthusiasm to bring help to the brotherly Yugo-Slav nation. And now the two governments of Vienna and Budapest throw us into a tragic conflict by sending our soldiers to Serbia, Slavs to kill Slavs for the benefit of the Germans and Magyars. We could not fight against our Serbian and Russian brothers, nor could we contribute towards the crushing of the French and English for whom

108 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

we have always entertained much love and respect.

Not only our feelings, our honour even was at stake. •

Surrounded on all sides by our enemies, invaded by the Prussian army, strangled, persecuted, and crushed, we responded to the call of our hearts. Knowing the Habsburgs, we know what awaits us if, after the war, Europe leaves us in the hands of our enemies. We rebelled as only one can rebel to-day, knowing that the fate reserved for us by the Prussians, the Austro-Magyars, and the Habsburgs will be that of our ancestors after the Battle of the White Mountain. True, the note of the Allied Powers of 10th January 1917, in answer to President Wilson's message, stating the objects of the Quadruple Entente in this war, speaks first of the Czecho-Slovaks, and gives a guarantee of their liberation. But without waiting for this, we have already ranged ourselves on the side of the Allies—the nation of John Hus, the nation of Comenius, Kollar, Palacký, could not act otherwise.

Thus we do not come to France and England to implore Europe to save us from being crushed under the Pan-German yoke. Whatever we have done, we have accomplished as our duty. We come to show by our deeds, our conduct, our past history, what our traditions have been, what

struggles we have come through, and what are our actual desires. We wish to show Europe by undeniable proofs, that Austro-Magyars were incapable of acting differently, that a contrary line of conduct was for them unthinkable. We wish to make it understood, that all the cruelties of the present war will certainly be repeated, that the Austrians and Magyars, the Habsburgs and Hohenzollerns will unite on the first occasion finally to crush and enslave us. Why should they not, having persisted in the attempt for 1200 years? How could they suddenly become just, equitable, moderate, and mild, when for centuries they have been violent, criminal, and barbarous oppressors? If Europe is to-day astonished and revolted at the disheartening sight which the coalition of the Central Empires gives us, we Czechs are in no way surprised. In truth, we feel some sorrow to find that Western Europe knows Vienna and Budapest so little, and that the sentimental legends about the old Emperor of Schönbrunn and the illusions about the chivalrous policy of the Magyars have been believed by the simple-minded public.

We would have it understood that the only means of breaking the power of the Central Empires is completely to destroy the Austro-Magyar kernel, on which they base their policy. Europe must finally understand the history of this Empire and

110 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

this dynasty. A State which has played such a part in history must disappear from the map of Europe !

Finally, we wish to make it clearly understood that Austria, to save her traditions and ancient character cannot do otherwise than give herself up to Prussia. A Pan-German Empire is the final end of the evolution of the Central European situation. There is, therefore, no means but to destroy Austria-Hungary, to arrest the *Drang nach Osten* of Prussia, and to break for ever the German hegemony in Europe. Moreover, an impassable barrier must be established against the Prussians to reduce them to their proper strength, so that they may easily be held in check if they should ever recommence their sinister schemes of to-day. This barrier—as we have already mentioned—may easily be realised. An independent Bohemia, supported in the north by a united and autonomous Poland, and in the south by the Yugo-Slav Empire, would form this impassable Slav barrier. The destruction of Austria which would follow, the reduction of the Magyars to their proper territory, comprising 8,000,000 inhabitants of exclusively Magyar nationality, and their separation from the Germans by Slav territories, would for ever render impossible a recurrence of the present world catastrophe.

This is what we would impress on the Powers of

the Entente. We Czecho-Slovaks, who have borne so many bitter struggles and sufferings, to-day have full right to lead a complete and independent national existence. Our tenacity, our patience, our perseverance, and our incessant labours are the sure proofs that we will not fail in our mission.

But we have a wider conception of life. The fate of a nation who throughout its existence must fight without cessation against three formidable foes is indeed heartrending. We are sick of this vain struggle, we aim at higher things and ardently desire to continue in the traditions of our great ancestors; it is our heartfelt desire to throw all our energies into the great work for the advancement of civilisation and the amelioration of social conditions.

That is why to-day we appeal to all those who are interested in the work of the reconstruction of Europe, "Dismember Austria-Hungary!" Remove from the Habsburgs the possibility of continuing to play their sinister part! Liberate the Austrian Slavs! Unite the Czecho-Slovaks and the Yugo-Slavs! Understand that after all it is in your interest, in the interest of Europe, and in the interest of humanity.

APPENDIX

I. THE ALLIES' NOTE TO PRESIDENT WILSON MENTIONING FOR THE FIRST TIME THE CZECHOSLOVAK QUESTION, WHICH THUS BECAME AN INTERNATIONAL QUESTION.

ON the 10th of January 1917, the Allies' Governments sent to the President of the United States a reply to his Note of the 19th December 1916, in which the Allied Powers declare :—

“ The civilised world knows that our war aims include primarily and of necessity the restoration of Belgium, of Serbia, and of Montenegro, with the compensation due to them ; the evacuation of the invaded territories in France, Russia, and Rumania with fitting reparation ; the reorganisation of Europe guaranteed by a stable settlement, based upon the principle of nationality, on the right which all peoplès, whether small or great, have to the enjoyment of full security and free economic development, and also upon territorial agreements and international arrangements so framed as to guarantee land and sea frontiers against unjust attacks ; the restitution of provinces or territories

formerly torn from the Allies by force or contrary to the wishes of their inhabitants; *the liberation of Italians, Slavs, Rumanians, and Czecho-Slovaks from foreign domination*; the liberation of the people who now lie beneath the murderous tyranny of the Turks, and the expulsion from Europe of the Ottoman Empire, which has proved itself so radically alien to Western civilisation.

By this Note the Allies have in principle accepted the programme of the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary.

II. THE ORDER OF THE DAY TO THE AUSTRIAN ARMY OF THE CARPATHIANS OF 28TH APRIL 1915.

In another place in this book we spoke of the famous surrender of the 28th Regiment of Prague, called "Children of Prague." The following is an Order of the Day issued by the Commandant-in-Chief and read to all regiments at the front and at the bases and camps in the interior :—

"Soldiers! On April 3rd, 1915, almost the whole of the 28th Regiment surrendered, without fighting, to a single enemy battalion! This disgraceful act has ruined the reputation for heroism and gallantry of this regiment, of which our whole Army was justly proud. The young reservists

called up to complete the forces of the regiment have arrived from the country completely corrupted by the malicious propaganda of individuals who, by perverting the spirit of our military youth, have served the interests of our enemies.

“ With the old soldiers, the spirit of loyalty and devotion to Austria has steadily increased and has won for their regiments and battalions esteem and glory. But since the young reservists after short instruction have rejoined their regiment, their bad influence upon the spirit of the regiment has at once become obvious.

“ The infamous and disgraceful act of the 3rd of April 1915, not only destroys the reputation of this regiment, but necessitates its name being struck off the list of our Army Corps until new deeds of heroism retrieve its character.

“ His Apostolic Majesty, our sublime military Commandant-in-Chief, has ordered by his decree of April 17th, 1915, the temporary dissolution of the 28th Regiment and the deposition of its banners in the Army Museum. Full of indignation and pain, you brave soldiers born in the same country, have to promise to expiate and efface by your blood the infamous and disgraceful act of that regiment. Our enemy, who does not hesitate to employ the most cowardly means to secure the success of his arms, must learn that there are still

soldiers in this country devoted to their Emperor and King.

“ARCHDUKE FREDERICK.”

III. MAGYAR TESTIMONY TO THE CONDUCT OF CZECHO-SLOVAK SOLDIERS.

Everybody knows the rôle played by Czecho-Slovak soldiers during this war.

Count Tisza himself admitted in the Hungarian Parliament that they were unreliable. “It is of no use,” he said, “to dwell on the reasons why the Czechs cannot be left in the garrisons of Bohemia.” As a matter of fact, the Czech soldiers have been sent to garrisons in Hungary in order to be separated from the Czech people and their revolutionary, anti-Austrian influence.

During the same discussion, Count Windischgraetz stated that the Chief Staff dared use them only when mixed with Magyars and Germans. But even then they would not run the risk of despatching them to the first line. And yet all these precautions were insufficient, as is proved by the events which took place in Transylvania.

The following is a passage from a speech delivered by M. Urmanczy, deputy of the Magyar Independence Party, during the session of the Budapest Parliament on September 5th, 1916 :—

“At the beginning of the Rumanian campaign,

116 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

a Czech regiment occupied a very important position in the Toelgyes Pass. When during the night of August 27th the Rumanians delivered an attack, the gendarmerie tried to resist, while a detachment of Pioneers endeavoured to destroy the bridges. The Czechs, however, retired without the slightest resistance! This happened six to nine miles from the Rumanian frontier. A few days later, the Czechs mustered again at Marosheviz, a town situated some thirty miles from the frontier; there they seized all provisions and behaved as if in a conquered territory; then, after having plundered the country, they disappeared nobody knows where. That is a military farce, the costs of which are paid by us. I do not want to enter into details.

“The invasion of Transylvania is one of the most serious disasters, and the carelessness and mistakes of our government are colossal, but the sole responsibility rests on the Austrian diplomacy and command and the Magyar Government. I do not want to paint the situation darker than it really is. If I speak of it, it is because I wish my feeble voice to reach the Emperor of Germany. He has already taken over the command of the Austrian Army. If he would succeed, he must take a further step and place under his tutelage a group of six or eight irresponsible persons who, by the side of our old King, direct the country's

affairs. This is necessary, the more so as we have in our army soldiers who in no case may be relied upon."

IV. AN AUTHENTIC TESTIMONY OF THE AUSTRIAN PREMIER UPON THE CONDUCT OF THE CZECH NATION DURING THE WAR.

The Austrian Premier, Count Clam-Martinitz, has employed a curious stratagem to regain the Czechs for Austria. While his predecessors did not dare to speak in public of the acts of treason committed by the Czechs during the war, the new Austrian Premier, who in certain quarters was wrongly taken for a Czech, has at last made up his mind to speak out the truth, already known to the whole world. At the same time he has attempted to reinstate the bulk of the nation in the eyes of the world, thus hoping to leave a way open for Austrophile policy to those Czecho-Slovak politicians who have not as yet compromised themselves.

It was this hope that induced him to issue two curious documents which constitute the most authentic testimony to the attitude of the Czecho-Slovak nation during this war, and which are also a proof of the desire of Austria to conciliate after twenty-nine months of war a people without which the monarchy could not exist.

118 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

The first of the two documents is a resolution proposed by Count Clam-Martinitz in the Electoral Committee of Large Landowners of Bohemia on December 6th, 1916, which he hoped would give him certain powers and prepare the ground for his mission. The second document is the verdict passed on the Czech deputy, Kramář.

The first document contains amongst other things the following :—

“ In the course of this war we have observed with feelings of profound grief that the subversive propaganda conducted for years past by elements hostile to the State has succeeded in perverting the military honour and sense of duty of the Czech nation towards the State. This is a matter of common knowledge, and the enemies of the Czech people record it with the greatest precision. Certain troops recruited from the Czech countries failed to do their duty on the battlefields in spite of the glorious traditions of the ancient and famous Czech regiments. Behind the front also this criminal agitation has had its fruits ; moreover, part of the Czech Press, especially during the first months of the war, failed in loyalty to Austria.

“ Nevertheless we may say with satisfaction that for some time there has been an improvement in this respect, and it would certainly be ungrateful not to recognise emphatically that other Czech

soldiers have been fighting bravely in the ranks of our valiant army and have given their blood for their country, thus showing that the whole nation is not involved in this hostility to the Monarchy."

The tendency of this extraordinary manifesto, issued, it seems, with the Emperor's approval, is obvious: the Czechs have only to repent to obtain remission of their treason and the forgiveness of the new Emperor. In offering peace to the Allies on December 10th, 1916, the Emperor again showed his willingness to restore the *status quo* of the Czechs, conditionally on their becoming loyal to Austria.

V. THE OFFICIAL TEXT OF THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT'S VERDICT IN THE AFFAIR OF DEPUTY KRAMÁŘ, SENTENCED TO DEATH.

The second document of the same kind as the resolution of Clam-Martinitz is still more significant, and recalls the arbitrary, fantastic, and iniquitous judgments of the Middle Ages. Count Clam-Martinitz realised that it was necessary to terminate the Kramář trial, which, instead of being a means of blackmailing the Czechs, had the effect of discrediting the monarchy before the whole world.

On May 21st, 1915, the Austro-Hungarian Commandant-in-Chief, Archduke Frederick, ordered the Czech deputy, Charles Kramář, the leader of the Young Czechs, to be arrested. He was brought with his colleague, Deputy Rašín, and two other friends, Červinka and Zamazal, before the military court, on the charge of high treason. After more than six months' remand the trial was opened. To the surprise and indignation of all, Kramář and his three friends were condemned to death, though no incriminating proofs were produced. It caused a great scandal everywhere, Austria-Hungary not excepted. Kramář made an appeal, but the High Tribunal confirmed the sentence. Nevertheless Austria was afraid to execute the condemned, and, wishing to finish an affair which had produced so much indignation everywhere, she tried to clear it up by a manœuvre which at the same time would intimidate the rebellious Czechs and bring them to their knees.

The Premier actually proposed to the Emperor to pardon the four Czechs sentenced to death, but also to make an example of them for the Czech nation. The sentence on Dr Kramář was commuted to fifteen years, that of Rašín to ten years, and that of the journalists Červinka and Zamazal to six years' penal servitude. In addition, the two deputies Kramář and Rašín were deprived

of their Parliamentary mandates. Needless to say, this magnanimous act of the Emperor was not disinterested, but had an ulterior motive.

Count Clam-Martinitz composed an official *communiqué*, published on January 4th, 1917, which enumerated the motives of the sentence, stigmatised the horrid treason of the Czechs in the army and abroad, and ended by the resolution mentioned above, that the Czech nation is not entirely corrupt, and that its leaders may yet reinstate themselves in the eyes of their mother-country, Austria-Hungary.

Thus for the first time the monstrous judgment on Kramář was officially made known. The following is the text of the document :—

“ The verdict of the Court of First Instance was that Dr Kramář was active against his own State before and after the outbreak of war, as the leader of the Pan-Slav propaganda and of the Russophil movement in Bohemia, by consciously co-operating with the enterprises which aimed at the destruction of the Monarchy. A widespread and organised revolutionary propaganda has been initiated in enemy as well as in neutral countries with the object of destroying our Monarchy by the severance of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia, and other lands inhabited by Slavs ; the bringing about and increase of internal dangers in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy ; the preparation of revolts and

122 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

civil wars in the interior, and the working by every possible means for the formation of a Czech State, independent of Austria-Hungary. The propaganda has been conducted, on the one hand, by Czechs residing abroad and those who escaped there after the outbreak of war (among whom are to be specially mentioned the Deputies Masaryk and Durich, and the former editor of *Národní Listy*, Pavlí, who as ensign deserted to the enemy's ranks), and on the other hand by foreigners who before the war had occupied themselves with the so-called Czech question in a sense hostile to the Monarchy, but who, after the outbreak of war, proved themselves to be decided enemies of our Empire (Denis, Leger, Cheradame, Count Bobrinski, General Volodimorov, and others).

“ Their means of propaganda were: the publication of newspapers which almost exclusively promulgated the idea of severance from the Empire (*La Nation tchèque, L'Indépendance tchecoslovaque, Cechoslovak, Cechoslovan*); the publication of declarations and manifestoes, of programmes and newspaper articles in other foreign papers; the foundation of societies and propaganda committees for the attainment of the above-mentioned object; the holding of meetings and congresses (in Prague, 1908 and 1912; in Petrograd, 1909, and others); and, finally, the organisation and equipment of Czech volunteer legions in Russia, France, and

England, and their employment in the enemy armies. Furthermore, after the outbreak of war there appeared among a certain portion of the Czech inhabitants of the Monarchy a number of cases showing not only a state of mind inimical to the State, but acts which might seriously injure the successful prosecution of the war as far as economic and military affairs are concerned.

“ The decision further considers as proven that long before the outbreak of war some Czech politicians, especially Kramář, had initiated and fostered a movement at congresses and on other occasions which, masquerading as Neoslavism, and, under the motto of Slav Reciprocity, developed from an apparently cultural movement into an actively treasonable one, in that it was preparing for the separation of the Czecho-Slovak countries from the Empire. According to the opinion of the military court this movement, of which the accused Kramář was one of the originators, instigators, and leaders—the accused Rašín took part in it only in a remote way—is the main cause of all the treasonable acts at home and abroad, behind the lines and at the front.

“ The causal connection between these events and the accused—which did not cease even after the outbreak of war—is to be deduced from the following circumstances :—

“ 1. As far as the revolutionary propaganda

abroad is concerned it is proven that the accused Kramář was in communication with the publishers, propagators, and editors of certain treasonable newspapers and publications, and especially with Brancianinov, Bobrinski, Denis, Masaryk, Pavlů, Propper, and others; that further he was a contributing editor of *Novoje Zveno*, in which before and after the outbreak of war the dismemberment of the Monarchy was openly demanded, and in which paper Dr Kramář's name conspicuously appeared on the title-page. It is especially to be mentioned that between the thoughts, aims, and expressions of these treasonable publications on the one hand, and the accused and the *Národní Listy* on the other, there is a suspicious similarity.

" 2. Dr Kramář used the *Národní Listy* as the organ of his politics, and exercised over them a decisive influence, but Rašín as the co-editor was also active in the same sense as Kramář, even though his activity did not reach the same dimensions, his sphere being principally economics and finance. Three articles, namely, those of August 4th, 1914, January 1st, 1916, and April 1916, give special proof of Kramář's activity in the *Národní Listy*. In them Dr Kramář manifests enthusiasm for the liberation of small nations to be accomplished in case of Allied victory in the world war, and for the development which will come to his nation awaking from sleep and rising

from humiliation to a new life. The Czech nation will develop its strength and attain its unification and organisation only after the catastrophe to which this war must lead. The style of this paper was in other respects also hostile to the Monarchy for a certain period after the outbreak of war.

“ The intentional emphasis of news favourable to our enemies, but unfavourable to us, the praise of the political and economic conditions of our enemies, the disparagement of the conditions in our Monarchy, a hidden appeal for passive resistance to the necessities of war, and especially to the first two war loans, supplied the key to the news printed.

“ 3. A copy of the periodical, *La Nation tchèque*, published in France, contains several articles dealing in a sharp and detailed manner with the thoughts and aims of the treasonable propaganda above described. This periodical, which manifestly illustrates the programme of Kramář and his followers, was found in Kramář's coat-pocket when he was imprisoned, and his excuse that the periodical was uncut, and that he did not know its contents, is, as was proven, untrue. The publisher of the periodical, *La Nation tchèque*, is Professor Denis, Kramář's friend, then a regular contributor to the *Národní Listy*; the secretary of the Paris periodical is Kepl, then the Paris corre-

spondent of the *Národní Listy*. Other foreign printed matter of a similar nature was also found in Kramář's house; among his papers, further, the Czech text of two articles from the London *Times* containing similar views was found.

" 4. An important cause of suspicion for criminal proceedings against Kramář is also his secret conversation with the Italian Consul in a Prague hotel in April 1915, shortly before Italy's declaration of war.

" 5. In a copy of a letter to the Viceroy, Prince Thun, found in Kramář's house, he, Kramář, expressly admitted that, always faithful to his political principles, he refrains from everything that might appear as approval of the war, and that his and the *Národní Listy's* conduct in regard to the war loan is guided by that conviction. According to the opinion of the Court, it is necessary to ascribe the painful phenomena which manifested themselves among a portion of the Czech population, and which placed considerable obstacles in the way of a successful conclusion of the war, to this activity of the accused. In this respect reference must be made especially to the distribution of treasonable Russian proclamations in Bohemia and Moravia; to the repeated manifestations of sympathy for the enemy; to the numerous but necessary criminal prosecutions for political offences; further, to the fact that Kramář, as the

leader of the Czech deputies, is, in the first place, responsible for the refusal to take part in a manifestation of loyalty contemplated by the Czech deputies at the beginning of the war ; and finally to the insignificant participation of the Czech population in the first two war loans as well as in the war collection of metal and the collections for the Red Cross. Actual cases, such as the organisation and the establishing of Czech volunteer legions in enemy countries, the dishonourable conduct of some Czech prisoners of war in enemy countries, who forgot their duty, the fact that in a certain portion of the army men surrendered repeatedly without being forced to do so, the misconduct of certain Czech regiments behind the lines and at the front, which was dangerous to the State and subversive of military discipline, which had the most disastrous effect on our operations, and which brought about the success of the enemy forces and had a demoralising effect on ours—the responsibility for all these falls on the shoulders of Kramář and Rašín as the result of years of agitation. According to what has been said, the activity of the accused Kramář and Rašín tended not only to bring about a forcible change in the territorial condition of the Empire, to increase internal dangers and foment revolts (Section 58c, 59b of Criminal Law), but their undermining activities caused serious injury to the power of

128 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

military operations against the enemy, wherefore the Court found that, besides the criminal offence, an offence against the military power of the State was involved according to Section 327 of the Military Criminal Law.

“ As far as the other two accused, Zamazal and Červinka, are concerned, the Court found that Zamazal, who had Russophil leanings and convictions inimical to the State, was, after the outbreak of war, occupied in spying out matters of military importance and conditions necessary to the defence of the State, as well as those regarding the operations of the Army. For that purpose, and with expert knowledge, he collected news and information regarding important military and strategic matters, and communicated them not only to individual persons, but also to newspapers, and especially to the *Národní Listy*. For similar purposes he undertook two trips to the war zone, until he was finally imprisoned on suspicion of espionage. Zamazal was in contact with the *Národní Listy* through the secretary of the paper, Vincenz Červinka, who, as has been proved, was, by means of a fictitious address, corresponding *via* Rumania with individuals abroad who were guilty of high treason (Pavlu and others). According to the opinion of experts in military science, the circumstantial evidence—as, for example, the fact that Červinka in a letter advised Zamazal to collect

the news with care—tends to prove that the activity of the two men in question served the interests of our enemy.

“The preceding proofs, taken from the record of the judgment, give the main features brought out in the course of proceedings regarding the whole organisation inimical to the State. Even though this picture is not a pleasing one, nevertheless the proceedings have shown, on the other hand, that only a relatively small portion of the Czech nation and its leaders was misled by the criminal agitation. It would therefore be erroneous to make the patriotic portion of the Czech nation responsible for the above-mentioned regrettable conditions. They vehemently condemn the errors of those referred to, the more so as at present an enlightened leadership of the Czech nation is exerting great efforts to bring the whole population back again to the Austrian State idea. It may be mentioned that the great majority of the Czech soldiers are fighting, as always, with great bravery, which is proved by their sanguinary losses and the numerous and well-merited high decorations they have received.

“Let him suffer a deserved punishment who is guilty. We must, however, refrain—as is only just—from indulging in general suspicion and condemnation.”



RUSSIA

GERMANY

FRANCE

SWITZERLAND

ITALY

AUSTRIA

POLAND

**CZECHS
SLOVAKS**

**HUNGARY
MAGYARS**

YUGOSLAVIA

SERBIA

ALBANIA

GREECE

RUMANIA

BULGARIA

Copenhagen

Hambourg

Berlin

Vienn

Budapest

Berne

Trente
Milan

Rome

Belgrade

Bukarest

Fettinya

Athen

Elbe

Rhein

Danube

Wesle
P

Vistule

Cracow

Theiss

Sava

Danube

Durrës

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132 BOHEMIA'S CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

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